A Young People's Life of the Buddha

by

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Contents

I	Birth	1
II	Boyhood	4
III	Youth	6
IV	Leaving Home	12
V	Compassion	21
VI	First Endeavors	25
VII	Success	31
VIII	Making Known the Teaching	37
IX	Sigala	43
X	Sariputta and Moggallana	45
XI	Kapilavatthu	48
XII	Daily Life	51
XIII	Mahapajapati	55
XIV	Wonder-working	58
XV	Discourses	61
XVI	The Kindness of the Buddha	66
XVII	Devadatta	70
XVIII	Mahaparinibbana	75

The Bhikkhu Silacara: A Biography 82

I
Birth

IN TIMES long past, fully twenty-five hundred years ago, where are now the border-lands between Nepal and the northern parts of the provinces of Oudh and North Bihar, there were a number of little kingdoms inhabited by different races of people, each ruled over by its own Raja or King. One of these little kingdoms which lay some distance north of the present-day town of Gorakhpore, on the north side of the river Rapti, was the land of a race called the Sakyas, the king who ruled over them at that time being called Suddhodana. The family to which King Suddhodana of the Sakyas belonged was called the Gotama family, so that his full name was King Suddhodana Gotama; and the name of the chief city in his kingdom where he had his chief palace, was Kapilavatthu.

This King Suddhodana had a chief queen whose name was Mahamaya. And after they had lived together for some time in married happiness, the Queen became aware that the day was drawing near when she should bring forth a child. So, before time came upon her, she asked her husband to give her leave to go and pay a visit to her own people who belonged to a city not very far away called Devadaha. King Suddhodana very willingly granted his chief Queen her wish, and sent out his men with orders to prepare the way for her, and do everything needed to make the journey to her father's house a pleasant and comfortable one for her.

Now half way between Kapilavatthu and the town of Devadaha there was a very fine forest garden called Lumbini where the people of both places used to go in the hot weather to enjoy the cool shade of the great Sal trees of which there were many in the grove. Here in the month of May, these great trees were covered from top to bottom with lovely blossoms. In among their long branches flew many kinds of birds singing their sweetest songs so that the whole air was full of the sound of their warbling. And over and through the myriads of flowers, swarms of bees went cheerfully humming, busily gathering honey on every hand.

When, as her bearers carried her along the road to Devadaha in her royal litter, Queen Mahamaya came to this pleasant place, she thought she would like to rest there a while in the cool shade for it was a hot day, and so she told her bearers to carry her in among the trees. But she had not been there long, walking about and enjoying the pleasing sights and sounds all round her, when suddenly and unexpectedly the pangs of child-birth came upon her, and in a little while, there in the Lumbini Grove, under the Sal trees, among the birds and bees and flowers, she brought forth a son.

The place where this Lumbini Grove stood at that far off time can still be seen to-day. For a great king called Asoka, who ruled over a large part of India about three or four hundred years after King Suddhodana's time, caused a tall pillar to

be set up in the forest-garden where thus was born the son of King Suddhodana and Queen Maya of Kapilavatthu, in order to mark the place; and on it he had a writing carved in deep-cut letters which can still be read, saying that he had put it there in order that men in the future should know where the great event had taken place. And although in the course of the two thousand and more years that have passed since King Asoka set up this pillar, the upper half of it has been broken off, and the half that is left leans all on one side, it still stands to this day in the place where King Asoka put it with his inscription on it for any one to see. And many people go to see it every day.

Now on the hills outside Kapilavatthu there lived many hermits; and among them there was one old hermit whom every one in Kapilavatthu admired and esteemed for his goodness, King Suddhodana himself being especially fond of him and showing his esteem and affection for him in many ways. This old hermit, when he heard that his great friend the King now had a little son, came down to the King's palace in the city to see the babe; and when he had come, the King asked him to give the babe his blessing, and, as he made his request, he held the infant out toward the hermit in a posture of doing homage to the old man. But the hermit said:

"Nay, Maharaja, it is not your son who should bow his head to me, but I who ought to bow my head before your son. For I see well that he is no ordinary child. I see well that as he grows up to manhood's years he will become a very great religious teacher. Yes, I believe he will become the greatest religious teacher the world has yet seen."

Having said this, the old man sat silent for a little while smiling to himself with a pleased and happy look. Then his eyes slowly filled with tears and he began to weep, the tears trickling down his cheeks.

"Why!" said the King in great bewilderment and some alarm, "What is the matter with you? Just a moment ago you were smiling and now you are weeping. Is anything wrong? Do you foresee some evil thing that is going to happen to my boy?"

"No, no, Maharaja," said the hermit, "do not be alarmed. No evil thing will ever come near your son. All-prosperous shall be his name, and all-prosperous he will be."

"Then why do you weep?" asked the King.

"I weep," said the hermit, "to think that I am now so old I must soon pass away, and I shall not live to see your son become the great teacher I know he one day will be. You Maharaja, will live to see that great and happy day, and so will many another person now alive, but I shall not live to see it. That, Maharaja, is why I cannot help weeping."

With these words the old man rose from his seat, and putting his two hands together, palm to palm, be bowed down before the little infant.

King Suddhodana was very much astonished at all the hermit had said and to see him bowing down his old grey head before the little baby; but he thought so much of him that he felt that he himself must do the same as the hermit had done, so he too bowed down and with folded hands, did obeisance to his own baby son.

Now in India in those days, it was the custom when a boy-baby was born, to gather together the wise men, and on the fifth day after the boy's birth, to bathe his head and give him the name that had been chosen for him by the wise men. And this was done with King Suddhodana's son also. The name the wise men chose for him was Siddhattha, a word which means all-prosperous or all-successful, one who will prosper or succeed in everything he sets out to do. For they said they could see that this boy was not going to be like any ordinary boy. They said they could see that if he followed the ordinary life of the world and in due time became king like his father before him, then he would become a very great king indeed. But, they said, if he did not follow his father on the throne of his country but instead turned to follow the religious life, then he would become a very great religious teacher. One of the wise men, however, spoke a little differently from the others. He said that he, for his part, was quite sure that when the boy grew up he would be certain not to follow the worldly life and take his father's place, but would leave throne and kingdom and everything behind him, and following the religious life, become the very greatest religious teacher in the world. This particular wise man thus said the very same thing that the old hermit had said about the boy's future.

The king, of course, was very much pleased that so many people, and these the wisest and most learned in his kingdom, should think that his little son was going to grow up to be a very great man. But he was not so highly pleased at the thought that he might not follow him upon the throne, but only become a great hermit. He wanted his son to grow up living the ordinary life of the world that every body lives; he wanted him to marry and get children; and when he himself was too old to govern the kingdom any longer he wanted to see his son mount the throne after him and rule the people as he had done, wisely and well. "And then, after a time," he thought to himself, "who knows? Perhaps my son may, become as great a king as any that have ever been, and rule, not only over little Kapilavatthu, but over the whole of India!" Thus did King Suddhodana consider within himself; and the bare thought of such a thing happening to a son of his filled him with the greatest delight; and he resolved to do all in his power to make sure that Siddhattha should live the ordinary worldly life and never think about anything else.

But in the meantime he had cause to be anxious about something else. Ever since she had given birth to Siddhattha, Queen Mahamaya had been ill. She had never recovered her former strength. She received all the best care that a queen could get, all the best doctors, all the most skilled attendants and nurses, but in spite of everything she died just two days after the day on which her baby had been given his name, and seven days after she had brought him into the world. Every one, especially her husband the king, grieved very much at her death, for she had been a good woman and a good queen beyond most women and queens. So now the sorrowful king had to give his motherless baby into the care of his mother's sister, Princess Mahapajapati, and she took care of him now and brought him up just as if he had been her own son. Thus the little boy Siddhattha never knew his own real mother.

II
Boyhood

THE old hermit and the wise men who gathered together on Siddhattha's name-giving day had agreed in saying that King Suddhodana's son was no ordinary boy, and their words were very soon proved true. After being brought up under the kind care of his aunt Mahapajapati who nursed and attended to her dead sister's child as if he had been her own, until he reached the age of eight years, teachers then were got for the young prince in order that he might learn reading and writing and arithmetic. Under these teachers' instructions he quickly learned all each had to teach in his own subject. Indeed, he learned so quickly and well that every one was astonished, his teachers and his father and foster-mother as well, at the rapid progress he made. For no matter what subject he was being taught, as soon as he was told anything, at once his mind took hold of what he was told and he never again forgot it, in this way showing himself particularly apt at arithmetic. Thus it was easily seen by all that as regarded the power of his mind he was well endowed, indeed, very much beyond the common. Yet with all his so superior ability in learning, and the high position he held in the country as the heir to the throne, he never failed to show to his teachers that respect which a pupil always should show, seeing that it is through them they gain. The prince was always gentle and dignified in his usual bearing towards every one about him, and towards his teachers in particular, ever modest and deferent and respectful.

In bodily attainments also, he was no less well endowed than he was in mind and character.

Notwithstanding the gentleness of his manners, notwithstanding that he was a gentle man in the very best sense of the words, he was bold and fearless in the practice of all the manly sports of his country. He was a cool and daring horseman and an able and skillful chariot-driver in this latter sport winning many chariot races against the best drivers in the country. Yet for all his keenness in trying to win a race, he was kind and compassionate towards the horses who helped him to win so often, and frequently would let a race be lost rather than urge his weary, panting horses beyond their strength. And not only towards his horses but towards all creatures he seemed to have a heart full of tenderness and compassion. He was a king's son and had never himself had to suffer hardship or distress, yet in his kind heart he seemed to know by sympathy how others felt when they were afflicted or in pain, whether these others were men or animals; and when he was quite to others as far as he could {sic}, and where it was possible, tried to relieve any suffering they already were enduring.

Thus, once when he was out walking in the country with his cousin Devadatta who had his bow and arrows with him, Devadatta shot a swan that was flying over their head. His arrow hit the swan and it fluttered down, painfully wounded, to the ground. Both boys ran forward to pick it up, but Siddhattha reached it first and holding it gently, he pulled the arrow out of its wing, put some cool leaves on the wound to stop it from bleeding, and with his soft hand stroked and soothed the hurt and frightened bird. But Devadatta was very much annoyed to see his cousin take the swan from him in this way, and he called to Siddhattha to give the swan to him because he had brought it down with his arrow. Siddhattha, however, refused to give it to him, saying that if the bird had been killed, then it would have been his; but as it was alive and not dead, it belonged to the one who actually secured possession of it, and so he meant to keep it. But still Devadatta maintained that it should belong to him because it was his arrow that had brought it down to the ground.

So Siddhattha proposed and Devadatta agreed that their dispute should be sent for settlement to a full council of the wise men of the country. The council, accordingly, was called and the question put before them; and some in the council argued one way and some the other; some said the bird should be Devadatta's, and others said that Siddhattha was quite right to keep it. But at last one man in the council whom nobody had ever seen before rose and said: "A life certainly must belong to him who tries to save it; a life cannot belong to one who is only trying to destroy it. The wounded bird by right belongs to the one who saved its life. Let the swan be given to Siddhattha." All the others in the council agreed with these wise words, and Prince Siddhattha was allowed to keep the swan whose life he thus had saved. And he cared for it tenderly until it was quite cured of its wound; then he set it free and let it fly back once more well and happy to its mates on the forest-lake.

III
Youth

IN THOSE days in India everybody knew that everything man needs for his life comes out of the ground, and that, therefore, the man who cultivates the ground and makes it bring forth food without which men cannot live at all, is the man who does the most useful and necessary work in any nation. So, once a year it was the custom in those days for the king of the country himself, along with his ministers, to go out to the fields and with his own royal hands, plow a field, and so set an example to all his people not to be ashamed of honest, honorable labor.

And one day in the spring, at the beginning of the plowing season, King Suddhodana went out from Kapilavatthu in full regal state, to carry through this yearly observance of the "Royal Plowing," as it was called. And all the people of the city went out after him, for this was their great annual holiday festival, in order to see their King plowing and to share in the feasting and merry-making that always followed. And the King took his young son with him out to the fields, and leaving him in the care of some attendants, he went to the plowing place and taking hold of the shafts of his own plow which was all decorated with gold, he plowed up and down the fallow field, followed by his ministers with their plows and oxen ornamented with silver, the ordinary farmers coming last with their common plows and yokes of oxen, all of them turning over the rich, fat, brown soil so that it might be made ready for the seed.

After a time, when the feasting began, Prince Suddhodana's attendants went off to share in it; and by and by all of them had gone away, quite forgetting the young prince, and leaving him alone by himself. Then, seeing himself thus left alone, the prince felt rather pleased, for already he was a thoughtful boy, and he wanted to get a chance to think quietly about what he had seen on this day of feasting and rejoicing, so he wandered away quietly by himself till he came to a nice, shady apple tree, and there he sat down and began to turn everything over in his mind.

First, so his thoughts ran, there was his father the king and all his ministers and the cultivators after them, plowing the land, and all were very happy and pleased looking; but he had noticed that the oxen did not look as if they were very happy. They had to pull their very hardest to make the plow go through the tough, turfy soil; they had to tug and strain at it till they were all perspiring and panting for breath. Evidently life was not easy for them, not even on a holiday like this when everybody else was making merry. They had to work hard; and often when they did not do exactly as their masters wished, they had to take harsh words and harsher blows. And young Prince Siddhattha thought that even amid the pleasures of a great holiday, there is always something that is not so pleasant.

And then from under his apple tree he looked at the movements of the birds and beasts and insects around him, and he noticed a lizard ran out near his feet and with its quick, darting tongue begin to lick up and eat the little, harmless, busy ants. And then, in a little while, a sly snake came along and caught the lizard in its jaws and swallowed it. And then a hawk swooped down from the sky and picked up and killed and devoured the snake. And again the prince began to think deeply and ask himself if it really was so, that all the prettiness and beauty of the shows of life have all got some thing at the back of them that is not pretty and beautiful at all. In all his own young life yet, he himself had not suffered anything, but as he looked round him now and pondered on what he saw, he perceived that there was a good deal of suffering going on all the time for somebody or something, even though he himself happened to be free from it. And he sat there intently until he became so wrapped up in his thoughts that he forgot everything else, forgot all about the day's festival, and his father, and the plowing, and everything.

In the meantime the "Royal Plowing" was done, and the feasting that followed it was all over. But when the young prince's attendants came back to where they had left him, they could not find him; he was not there. Very much frightened, they started looking for him everywhere, for soon his father the king would be asking for him in order to take him home with him. At last, they found him sitting as quiet and still as a stone statue under his apple tree, so completely absorbed in his thoughts that at first he did not know they were speaking to him. But when at length they succeeded in making him understand that his father was calling for him, that the hour was getting late and it was time to go home, then he rose and went back with them to his father; but all the way home his heart and thoughts were filled with pity and concern for all living things that love their lives so much, and yet find it so hard to live.

But the king was far from pleased to find that his son was beginning so early to think seriously about life and what it really means. He began very much to fear that what the old hermit had said was already beginning to come true, that his son's thoughts already were turning in the direction of the religious life, and that if they were not soon turned away from it, what he was so much afraid of would come to pass, and Siddhattha would leave his father's house, and he would have no son left to follow him on the throne of the country. So he resolved at once to do something to turn his son's mind away from such serious thoughts. He resolved to make life in every possible way so pleasant and comfortable for his son that in his own pleasure and enjoyment, he would stop thinking so much about how other beings fared in life.

So he ordered his workmen to build three splendid palaces for his son. The first one was built of good, stout blocks of wood outside, and lined inside with fine, sweet-smelling cedar. In this warm, comfortable palace, he meant his son to live during the cold winter season. The second palace was built of cool, polished marble, so as to be nice and pleasant to live in during the hot season when everything outside was burning in the hot sun. And the third palace was built of good hard bricks and had a roof of blue tiles on it to keep out the heavy monsoon rains. In this last palace the king meant his son to pass the rainy season safe from

its damp and chills. Round each of these palaces, also, he caused to be laid out a splendid pleasure-garden planted with every kind of shady and flowering tree, with many ponds and running streams in it where there grew lotuses of all colors, so that the prince might be able to go out walking or riding in it when he chose, and always find coolness and shade and flowering beauty wherever he looked.

But all these pleasant things, palaces, gardens, ponds, walks and rides, and the hosts of pleasant companions that were provided along with them, were all of no use to stop the young prince from thinking. And the king saw this. He saw that all he had contrived to turn his son's thoughts towards his own pleasure only, had completely failed, and he called his ministers to him and asked them what else he could do to make sure that the old hermit's prophecy should not come true.

His ministers replied that, in their opinion, the best way to occupy a young man's mind so that he would not think about such things as leaving the worldly life, would be to get him married to a nice, pretty young wife. Then, so they said, he would be so taken up with her that he would have no time or inclination to think of anything else; and in due time, when his father wished it, he would take his place on the throne in the regular way, and live in the world just like everybody else.

This seemed to the king to be very good advice; but how could he make sure of getting for his son a wife so lovely and attractive that once he was married he would be completely to her, altogether charmed with her loveliness, and henceforth live with no other object but to make her perfectly happy?

After considering the matter for some time, the king hit upon a good plan. He sent out an order that all the most beautiful maidens in the country were to come to Kapilavatthu on a certain day and pass before Prince Siddhattha in order that he might say which of them was the most beautiful and give her a prize for her beauty; while each of the others who came and showed themselves would receive, each one, a gift from the hand of the Prince, great or small, according as he thought her to come near or fall below the chief of them all in beauty.

Now when King Suddhodana gave this order, he also arranged that some of his ministers should keep a close watch on his son as the procession of beautiful maidens passed before him, and if they saw him show any sign of special pleasure when any particular maiden came forward to receive her gift, then they were to take note who she was and come and let him know.

So the day came for the beauty competition, and all the fairest, most beautiful girls in the kingdom passed in a brilliant, dazzling procession of loveliness before the prince, one after another, and each received from his hands the gift which he thought her beauty deserved. But instead of being pleased thus to come close and touch the hand of their sovereign's son, each girl seemed to be almost afraid as she approached him, and glad, when, having got her gift, she was at liberty to pass on and run back among her companions again.

And there was a good reason for their behaving in this unusual way. For this prince of theirs was not at all like any other young man they knew. He did not seem to be looking at them, or indeed, thinking of them at all! He handed each girl her gift, but he seemed to be thinking of something else altogether, something great and solemn it seemed, far, far beyond their smiling faces and dainty ways.

Indeed, some of them said that as he sat there on his prince's throne, he seemed to them to be more like a god than a human being. And the ministers who, by the king's command, were watching him, felt almost afraid at the thought that they would have to go back and tell King Suddhodana that his and their plan had failed, that his son had not shown the least pleasure at the sight of a single one of all the beauties who had passed before him. For now nearly all the girls had passed, nearly all the prizes had been given away, and the prince still sat there unmoved, his mind evidently far away from this scene of delight for everybody else, this gay procession of one beauty after another.

But now, just as the last girl took the last prize from the prince's hand, and curtsied and passed on, there came along hastily, a little late, one more girl; and those who were watching the prince noticed that he gave a little start as she drew near. The girl too on her part, instead of passing him with her eyes timidly turned on the ground as all the other girls before her had done, looked Prince Siddhattha straight in the face, and with a smile asked "Is there no gift left for me, too?"

"Sorry am I," said the prince smiling back to her, "that all the gifts I had to give out are finished but take this." And with that he took a string of splendid jewels from his neck and clasped them round the girl's waist.

Then the king's ministers, when they saw this, were very glad; and after they had found out that the name of this young girl who had come last, was Yasodhara, and had learned where her father Suppabuddha lived, they went back to king and told him all about it; and they very next day the king sent off messengers to Suppabuddha, asking that his daughter Yasodhara might be given in marriage to Prince Siddhattha.

Now it was the custom among the Sakya people who were a strong, vigorous, mountain folk, that when any young man wanted to marry, he first must show himself as clever and skillful in horse-riding, shooting with the bow and arrow, and wielding the sword, as any other young man in the kingdom; and Prince Siddhattha, although he was the heir to the throne, had to follow this custom just the same as every other young man.

So one day there came to the maiden of Kapilavatthu, all the strongest and cleverest young men of the Sakya kingdom, all the best horsemen and archers and swordsmen. And each of them before the assembled crowd of ministers and people, showed what he could do with horse, with bow and arrow and with sword. And Prince Siddhattha, mounted on his white horse Kanthaka, showed what he could do, also; and in the contest with the others he showed that he was as good as, and even better than, the best in the country.

At shooting with the bow and arrow, he sent an arrow farther than the young man who up till then had been considered the best archer in the kingdom, his own cousin Devadatta.

At the exercise or test with the sword, he cut a young, growing tree through so neatly and cleanly at one stroke, that after his sword had passed through it, it still remained standing for several moments, so that those who were judging the contest at first thought it had not been cut through at all. But then there came a puff of wind, and the tree fell over to the ground, and everybody saw that it had been cut through as smooth and even as a piece of butter. At this test, Prince

Siddhattha beat his own half-brother Nanda, who, so everybody thought, could not be beaten at swordsmanship by anyone in the country.

The next test was in horse-racing; and on his fast white horse Kanthaka, Prince Siddhattha easily left all the others behind. But they were not satisfied to see him win this test so easily. They said: "O, if we had a swift horse like that to ride, we could win a race to. This is only the merit of the horse; it is not the merit of the man. But we have here a wild, black stallion which has never yet allowed any man to get on his back. Let us now see which of us can mount him and stay on his back longest."

So all the youths tried hard, one after another, to catch hold of the stallion and swing himself on to its back, but all of them were flung to the ground by the proud, fierce animal, until it came to the turn of Arjuna, the best rider in the kingdom. After a little struggle, this Arjuna managed to get on the stallion's back and stay there while he whipped it once round the race-course. Then, before anybody knew what it was going to do, the savage animal bent its head round quickly, and catching Arjuna by the foot with its big strong teeth, it pulled him by force out of the saddle and dashed him to the ground, and if some of the syces had not run forward quickly and dragged him away, while others beat off the stallion, it would have trampled Arjuna to death. Then it Siddhattha's turn to try to ride the stallion, and everybody thought he would be sure to be killed, since Arjuna the best rider in the country had just missed being killed by it. But Prince Siddhattha just walked quietly up to the stallion, laid one hand on its neck and the other on its nose as he spoke a few soft, gentle words to it; then he patted it on its sides, and to the surprise of everybody, it stood still and allowed the prince to mount it and ride backward and forward just as he wished, subdued entirely to his will. It was the first time anybody had come near it who was not afraid of it and did not want to beat it, but instead spoke and acted kindly to it; and in its surprise at this new kind of treatment, the stallion allowed the prince who was neither afraid of, nor angry at, it, to do as he pleased with it.

Then every one admitted that Prince Siddhattha was the best horseman in the kingdom, too, and well worthy to be the husband of so fair a maiden as beautiful Yasodhara. And Suppabuddha, Yasodhara's father, also agreed that this was so, and he willingly gave his daughter as wife to so handsome and manly a young prince. And so Prince Siddhattha was married amid scenes of great rejoicing to beautiful Yasodhara, and went with her to live in a new and splendid palace which the king had caused to be built for them, surrounded by everything delightful and pleasing that any young man's heart could desire.

And now King Suddhodana was beginning to feel satisfied that his son would no longer think about giving up his chance of getting a throne and becoming a religious man. But in order to make quite sure that his thoughts would never turn in this direction, the king ordered that nobody about the prince, none of his servants or attendants within the palace walls or grounds, were ever to speak a single word about such things as old age, or sickness, or death. They were always to act as if there were no such unpleasant things in the world.

More than that. The king sent away from his son's palace all the servants and attendants who showed the least sign of getting old or weak or sickly. He

arranged that there should be nobody in the palace and the gardens round it but young, happy, pleasant, smiling people. Those who happened to fall ill were at once taken away and not allowed to come back until they were perfectly well again. The king also gave strict orders that no one when at the princes' presence, was to show any sign of weariness or sadness. Everybody round him was required to be cheerful and merry and bright all day long. And at night too, when his attendants danced and sang before the prince, they were never to show any signs of weariness or fatigue with their exertions. In short: King Suddhodana tried so to arrange everything and everybody around the prince that he should not know or even suspect that there was anything else in the world but smiles and laughter and joyous, happy youth. For, to complete his arrangements, he caused a high wall to be build round the prince's palace and gardens, and gave strict command to the keepers of the gates that on no account were they to allow the prince to pass outside.

In these ways did King Suddhodana think to make sure that his son would never come to see anything but the pleasing sight of youth and beauty, never hear anything but the pleasant sounds of songs and laughter, and so be content to live as his father had done before him, and never wish to become a religious ascetic, or seek any other higher good than the life of a King's favorite son.

IV
Leaving Home

BUT in spite of all the luxury with which he was surrounded, and the pains that were taken too keep from him anything that might make him think the least unhappy thought, the young prince Siddhattha did not feel altogether as happy as his father wished him to feel. He wanted to know what lay outside these palace walls he was never allowed to pass. To distract his attention from any such questions about the outside world, his father planned new festivals and merrymakings of all kinds; but it was all of no use. The prince continued to become more and more dissatisfied with his shut-in life. He wanted to see more of the world than was contained within his own palace and pleasure-grounds, even though the life he led there was full of delights. He wanted to see how other people who were not princes, lived their lives, and told his father again and again that he could not be really happy until he had seen this. Until a day came when the king annoyed by his continual request to be allowed to go outside the palace grounds, could refuse his wish no longer, and said to him: "Very well, my son. You shall go outside the palace walls and see how our people live; but first I must prepare things so that everything may be made fit and proper for my noble son's eyes to look at."

So the king sent out his messengers through the city to tell the people that on a certain day his son was coming out to see the city; and that everybody must hang flags and banners and gay bunting out of all their windows, and clean up their houses and paint them afresh, and put flowers over their doors and in front of them, and make everything as bright and gay as they possibly could. He also gave strict orders that nobody was to show himself in the streets who had anything in the least the matter with him. Nobody who was blind or lame or sick in any way, no old folk and no lepers were to appear in the streets of the city anywhere that day, but all such people must stay at home indoors all the time the prince was riding through the streets. Only the young, the strong, the healthy and happy looking people were to come out and give the prince a welcome to the city. Orders were also given that on this day no dead were to be carried through the streets on their way to the burning place, but all dead bodies were to be kept till the next day.

And the people did as the king commanded them. They swept all the streets and watered them to keep the dust from rising. They put new coats of whitewash on their houses and made them bright with wreaths and festoons of flowers hung in front of their doors. They hung streamers of many colored cloth from the trees that grew along the road by which the prince would come. In short, they did all they could think of to make their city look to the eyes of their prince as if it were not a city of this world at all but one of the cities of the gods in the heaven worlds.

Then when everything was all ready, Prince Siddhattha came forth from his palace and, mounting his splendid car, passed slowly through all the streets of the city, looking everywhere about him, and everywhere seeing nothing but the glad, smiling faces of the people, all pleased to see their prince come among them, some of the crowd standing and shouting as he passed: "Victory, victory to our Prince!" while others ran in front of his chariot throwing flowers before the horses' feet. And the king, as he saw how well the people had obeyed his commands, felt highly pleased, and thought that now that his son had seen the city, and had seen nothing but what was pleasant and happy-looking, now surely he would feel more contented in mind, and once for all give up his brooding thoughts.

And then, suddenly, all that he had planned so well was completely spoiled, all his hopes and desires for his son brought to nothing. From a little hut by the roadside before any one could prevent him, there tottered out a man, with grey hair and nothing on him but a few wretched rags. His face was all withered and wrinkled, his eyes dim and bleary, there were no teeth in his mouth. And as he learned, trembling and half doubled up, on a staff, he had to hold it hard with his two skinny hands to save himself from falling. Then dragging himself along the street and paying no attention to the scenes of rejoicing all round him, he let a few, weak, stammering sounds come from between his pale lips. He was begging the people to give him something to eat or else he would die that very day.

Of course everybody round him was very angry at him for daring to come out of his house on this day when the king's son was visiting the city for the first time, and the king had commanded that people like him were not to show themselves in the street, and they tried to drive him back into his house before the prince should see him. But they were not quick enough. Prince Siddhattha saw the man, and he was horrified at the sight. He hardly knew what he was looking at.

"What is that, Channa?" he hurriedly said to his favorite attendant at his elbow. "Surely that cannot be a man! Why is he all bent? Why does he not stand up straight like you and me? What is he trembling for? Why is his hair that strange color and not black like mine? What is wrong with his eyes? Where are his teeth? Is this how some men are born? Tell me, good Channa, what does this mean?"

Then Channa spoke to his master and said:

"My Prince, this man is what is called an old man. He was not born like this. He was born like everybody else, and at one time, when he was young, he was straight and strong and black-haired and clear-eyed. But now he has been a long time in the world, and so he has become like this. Do not concern yourself about him, my Prince. This is just old age."

"What do you mean, Channa?" said the Prince. "Do you mean that this is quite common? Do you mean that everybody who has been a long time in the world becomes like this? Surely no! I never saw anything like this before. Old age! What is old age?"

"My Prince," said Channa, the charioteer, "every one in the world who lives a long time becomes just like this man."

“Everybody, Channa? You? I? My father? My wife? Shall we all become like this and have no teeth or black hair, and be bowed and trembling, and have to lean on a stick when we want to move about instead of standing up straight?”

“Yes, my Prince,” said Channa. “Everybody in the world, if they live long enough, become just like this man. It cannot be stopped. It is old age.”

Then Prince Siddhattha ordered Channa to drive him home again at once. He did not want to see any more of the city that day. He could not take any more pleasure in the sight of the laughing crowds and the gaily decorated streets. He wanted to get away by himself and think about this terrible thing he had just heard for the first time, that he, a prince, heir to a throne, he and everybody he loved, one day must grow weak and feeble and have no more joy in living because they would be old, and there was nothing that could stop this from happening to them, no matter who they were, no matter how rich and great and powerful.

And when he got home to his palace, although his servants set out before him a royal feast of everything delightful to eat, he could not eat, for he was thinking all the time: “Some day I will grow old.” And then, when the dishes he had hardly tasted were taken away, and the dancers and singers came before him to try to please him with their songs and dances, he hardly could bear to look at their graceful poses or listen to their instruments and voices, for he was thinking: “Some day you will all grow old, every one of you, even the prettiest.” And when at length he had sent them all away, and lay down to rest, he could not sleep, but lay awake all night thinking of himself and his beautiful wife Yasodhara, and how that one day they would both grow grey and wrinkled and toothless and ugly like that man he had seen to-day in the streets of the city, and have no more pleasure in one another. And as he thought of this, he began to wonder if out of all the millions and millions of men in the world somebody or another among them all had not found some way of escaping this terrible thing, old age. More than that; he began to wonder if, supposing he tried, tried very hard, stopped trying to do anything else, and gave all his thoughts and energies to this one thing, might he not himself find out such a way for the benefit of himself and Yasodhara and his father and everybody in the world?

Of course the King was told about what had happened, and was very much distressed to hear it. And he, to, lay awake all that night trying to think of some new pleasures with which to distract his son’s attention from these thoughts which, if they were not soon stopped, would surely lead him to leave his home behind and go and live the lonely life of a religious hermit or wanderer. And the King did devise and offer his son new pleasures, but it was all useless. The young Prince refused them. Instead, he pleaded with his father that he might be allowed to go out and visit the city another time without any one being told that he was coming, so that he might be able to see it just as everybody else saw it, following its usual every-day life.

As first King Suddhodana was very unwilling to give his son his wish, for he feared now more than ever, that if once Siddhattha saw the kind of life that is lived by people who are not fortunate enough to be king’s or rich men’s sons, but have to earn all they get by the sweat of their brow, then the old hermit’s prophecy would come true, and Siddhattha would not succeed him on his throne.

However, he knew quite well, that having seen so much, his son would never be happy again until he had seen more, whatever the result might be. So once more, though very unwillingly, he gave permission for his son to leave the palace and see the life of the city; and once more Prince Siddhattha went forth beyond the walls that were meant to shut out from him all knowledge of any unpleasant thing. This time, so that the people would not know him as he passed among them, he did not go out dressed like a prince, and nobody was told he was coming. This time, too, he went on foot, not in his chariot, and dressed just like a young man of good family. And nobody went with him but Channa, he also in a dress different from his ordinary one, so that the people would not know him either, and through him, recognize his master.

No huzza-ing crowds, no flower-decked houses, no waving flags did the eyes of the young Prince look upon this time, but just the ordinary sights of a city full of common folk all busy about the various occupations by which men earn their bread. Here a blacksmith was perspiring over his anvil as he hammered and beat out a plowshare or a sickle or a cart-wheel tire. There, in a richer quarter, in their little shops sat the jewelers and goldsmiths, cunningly fitting jewels and precious stones into chasings of silver and gold, skillfully fashioning out of the yellow metal, necklaces and bangles and anklets. There, in another street, the dyers were hanging out to dry in long lines, lengths of newly dyed brilliantly colored cloths, blue and rose-red and green, and many another pretty color, that one day would drape the form of beauty making it yet more beautiful. And there, too, were the bakers busily baking their cakes and serving them out to customers waiting to get and eat them while they were yet fresh and warm from the baking. At these and similar sights the young Prince now looked with the keen interest of one who had never seen such sights before; and his heart found pleasure in seeing how busy every one seemed, and so interested and seemingly contented and happy in their work. And then, again, something happened that spoiled all his pleasure in this day of new and interesting sights, and sent the Prince home a second time, sad and sorrowful at heart.

For as he was passing along one of the streets with Channa, a little way behind him, he heard a cry as of some one calling for help. He looked around to see what was the matter, and there on the ground near him he saw a man lying twisting his body about in the dust in a very strange way. And all over his face and his body there were ugly looking purple blotches, and his eyes were rolling queerly in his head, and he gasped for breath as he tried to get on to his feet; and every time he got up a little way, he fell helplessly down again.

In the kindness of his heart the Prince at once ran forward to the man and picked him up, and resting his head on his knee, tried to comfort the man, asking him what was wrong with him, and why he did not stand up. The man tried to speak but he could not. He had no breath left for speaking; he could only moan.

“You, Channa,” said the Prince to his servant who had now come up to him, “tell my why this man is like this. What is the matter with his breath? Why does he not answer me?”

“O, my Prince,” cried Channa, “do not hold the man like that. This man is ill. His blood is poisoned. He has the plague-fever, and it is burning him up so that he

cannot do anything but just draw hard breath until his breath too is burnt up by the fever."

"But are there any other men who become like this? Might I become like this?" the Prince asked Channa.

"Indeed you may, my Prince. If you hold the man so close as that. Pray put him down and do not touch him, or the plague will come out from him and go into you, and then you will become the same as he is."

"Are there any other bad things that come on men besides this plague, Channa?"

"Yes, my Prince, there are others—many, many others—of many different kinds, and all of them painful, as this is."

"And can no one help it? Does sickness like this come on men without their knowing it, by surprise?"

"Yes, Prince, that is what it does. Nobody knows what day he may fall ill like this. It may happen at any time to anybody."

"To anybody, Channa? To Princes, too? To me?"

"Yes, even to you, my Prince."

"Then everybody in the world must be afraid all the time, since nobody knows when he goes to bed at night, if he may not awake in the morning ill like this poor man?"

"That is so, my Prince. No one in the world knows what day he may fall ill, and after much suffering, die."

"Die! That is a strange word! What is 'die,' Channa?"

"Look, my Prince," said Channa.

The Prince looked where Channa pointed, and saw a little crowd of people coming along the street weeping, while behind them came four men carrying on a board a terribly lean-looking man who lay there flat and still, his cheeks fallen in, his mouth set in a strangely ugly grin, but never turning, never saying anything in complaint to those who were carrying him when they gave him a hard jolt on his hard board as they stumbled over a stone in their way. The Prince looked after the little crowd as it passed him wondering why they were all crying, and why the man on the board did not tell those who were carrying him to be more careful and not shake him so much. And when they had gone a little further, to his astonishment, he saw the man's bearers lay him on a pile of wood, and then put a light to the wood so that it blazed up in a fierce flame, and still the man did not move, though the flames were licking all round his head and feet.

"But what is this, Channa? Why does that man lie there so still and let these people burn him? Why does he not get up and run away?" asked the Prince in horror and bewilderment.

"My Prince," said Channa, "that man has died. He has feet but he cannot run with them. He has eyes but they do not see anything now. He has ears but he will never hear anything with them again. He cannot feel anything any more, neither heat nor cold, neither fire nor frost. He does not know anything any more. He is dead."

"Dead, Channa? Is this what it means to be dead? And I — shall I too, a king's son, one day be dead like this? And my father, and Yasodhara, and every

one I know — shall we, every one of us, some day lie dead like that poor man on that pile of burning wood?"

"Yes, my Prince," said Channa. "Everybody who is alive must some day die. There is no help for it. There is nothing more sure and certain. No one can stop death from coming."

The Prince was struck dumb. He could say no more. It seemed to him such a terrible thing that there should be no way of escape from this devouring monster death who ate up everybody, even kings and the sons of kings. He turned home in silence, and going to his room in the palace, sat there by himself thinking and brooding hour after hour about what he had seen that day.

"But this is awful," said the Prince to himself as he sat pondering alone. "Every single person in the world must some day die, and there is no help for it, so Channa says! O, there must be help somewhere, for such a state of things! I must find help; I will find help, for myself and my father and Yasodhara and everybody. I must find some way by which we shall not always be under the power of these hateful things, old age, and sickness, and death."

On another occasion as the Prince was driving to the Royal Gardens, he came face to face with a man garbed in the flowing orange-colored robes of the recluse. The Prince observed the Monk closely, and, feeling an inward pleasure at the calm and the dignified mien and the noble bearing of the man, he questioned Channa about the life led by such a person. The charioteer replied that the man belonged to the class of people who had "left the world" to seek a remedy for the sufferings and sorrows of the world. The Prince was highly elated over this, and going to the Gardens, spent the day happily, himself having made up his mind to leave home.

As the Prince thus sat thinking and talking to himself, news was brought to him that his wife had given birth to a fine baby boy. But the Prince showed no signs of gladness at the tidings. He only murmured with distracted look: "A Rahula has been born to me, a fetter has been born to me." And because this was what his father had said when he heard that he was born, the baby was called on his name-giving day, Prince Rahula.

After this day, King Suddhodana saw that it was of no more use trying to shut Prince Siddhattha up in his pleasant palace and keep him occupied only with his own pleasure and delight, so now he allowed him to go out into the city as much as he pleased. And very often the Prince drove round the city, seeing everything, and thinking, always thinking about what he saw, and trying to make up his mind what to do.

After one of these drives through the city, as, on his way home again, he was passing the rooms of the palace where the ladies lived, one of the Princesses called Kisagotami happened to be looking out of her window, and seeing the Prince, she was much struck by his handsome, noble appearance, and exclaimed to herself: "O how happy, how cool, how content must be the mother, and the father, and the wife of such a splendid young Prince?"

But she spoke louder than she thought she was speaking, and the Prince, as he passed, heard what she was saying. And he thought to himself: "Yes, mother and father and wife have happiness and comfort and content in their hearts at having

such a son and husband. But what is real true happiness and comfort and content?"

And the Prince's mind, being already turned away from delight in worldly things by the sights he had seen and the thoughts about them that filled his mind all the time, he said low to himself: "Real true happiness and comfort and content come when the fever of craving and of hating and of delusion is cured. When the fires of pride and false notions and passions are all put out, then comes real true happiness and coolness and content. And that is what I and all men need to get. That is what I must now go forth and seek. I cannot stay any longer in this palace leading this life of pleasure. I must go forth at once and seek, and go on seeking till I find it — that real true happiness which will put me and all men beyond the power of old age and sickness and death. This lady had taught me a good lesson. Without meaning it she has been a good teacher to me. I must send her a teacher's fee."

So he took from his neck a fine pearl necklace he was wearing at the time, and sent it with his compliments to Princess Kisagotami. And the princess accepted it from the Prince's messenger and sent him back with her warmest thanks to the Prince, for she thought it was meant for a token that the handsome and clever young Prince Siddhattha had fallen in love with her and wished to make her his second wife.

But the Prince's thoughts were very far indeed from any such thing, and his father and his wife knew it very well. Indeed, every one about the Prince could see that he was now completely changed, more serious and thoughtful than he had ever been, when he came home from this day's ride about the city. But the father could not bear to lose his son without making one more, one last attempt to keep him. So he caused all the cleverest and most entrancingly beautiful singers and dancers in the kingdom to be brought to his son's palace, and they sang and danced before Prince Siddhattha as King Suddhodana commanded, doing their very best with their gayest, sweetest songs, their most enchanting and alluring postures to draw from his son smiles of approval and pleasure. And for a time the Prince looked at, and listened to them, not wishing to disappoint his father by a flat refusal to see them. But his eyes only half saw the beautiful, enticing forms before him, for his mind was taken up with something else that never left it alone now; he was thinking of the one only thing that now seemed worth thinking about at all — how old age and sickness and death might be escaped by him and by all men, for ever. And at last, weary with so much thinking, worn out with so much brooding, in the midst of the music and loveliness that no longer now had power to charm or please, he fell into a dozing sleep.

The singers and dancers soon noticed that he whom they were supposed to be amusing, cared so little for their efforts, that he did not even take the trouble to keep awake and look at, and listened to them. So they stopped their dancing and singing, and lay down just where they were to wait till the Prince woke again. And soon they, too, like the Prince, fell asleep without knowing it, leaving the lights in the room all burning.

After some time the Prince woke from his doze and looked round him in astonishment, and also in disgust; for what did he see? All those girls who were

supposed to be the prettiest and most charming in the country, and only a little while before had been posing before him in the most enchanting attitudes, now were scattered about the floor of the apartment in the ugliest, the most ungainly positions imaginable; some snoring like so many pigs, some with their mouths gaping wide open, some with the spittle oozing from the corners of their lips dribbling down over their dresses, some grinding their teeth in their sleep like hungry demons. So ugly, so repulsive did they look, one and all, that the Prince wondered how he ever could have taken any pleasure in them. The sight of all this that he once had thought loveliness so completely turned to loathsomeness, was the last thing needed to fill his mind with complete disgust for the life he was leading. His mind was now fully made up to leave all this repulsiveness behind him, and to go forth immediately to look for that real happiness which would bring to an end all evil things.

Rising quietly, so as not to disturb and wake any of the sleeping girls, he stole out of his room, and called his servant Channa to him, and told him to saddle his favorite white horse, Kanthaka, for now, at once, he was going out on a long journey.

While Channa was away getting ready Kanthaka, Siddhattha thought he would go and take a last look at his little son before he left. So he went to the room where his wife lay sleeping with her babe beside her. But when he opened the door and looked in, he saw that his wife was sleeping with her hand so placed that it rested on and was covering the baby's head.

"If I try to move her hand," said the Prince to himself, "so as to see my boy's face, I fear I may wake her. And if she wakes, she will not let me go away. No, I must go now without seeing my son's face this time; but when I have found what I am going forth to seek, I shall come back and see him and his mother again."

Then, very quietly, so as to wake nobody, the Prince slipped out of the palace, and in the stillness of the midnight hour mounted his white horse Kanthaka who also kept quite quiet, and neither neighed nor made any other sound that might wake any one. Then, with faithful Channa holding on to Kanthaka's tail, Siddhattha came to the city gate, and, passing through without any one trying to stop him, rode away from all who knew and loved him.

When he had gone a little distance, he pulled up Kanthaka and, turning round, took a last look at the city of Kapilavatthu sleeping there so calm and quiet in the moonlight, while he, its Prince, was leaving it like this, not knowing when he should see it again. It was the city of his fathers, the city where he was leaving behind him a young and beloved wife, and a precious infant son, but he did not weaken in his resolve one jot; no thought of turning back to them entered his mind. That mind was now thoroughly made up. Again he turned his face in the direction he had to go, and rode on till he came to the banks of a river called the Anoma. Here he dismounted, and standing on the sandy beach, that on both hands, stretched away, white as silver, in the moonlight, he took off all his jewels and ornaments, and giving them to Channa, said: "Here, good Channa. Take these adornments of mine and white Kanthaka, and take them back home. The hour has now come for me to give up the worldly life."

“O my dear master,” cried Channa, “do not go away like this all by yourself. Let me too leave the world and come with you.”

But although Channa again, and yet once more, asked to be allowed to stay with his master and to go with him wherever he went, the Prince was firm and refused to take him with him.

“It is not yet the time for you to retire from the worldly life,” he said to Channa. “Go back to the city at once and tell my father and mother from me that I am quite well.” And he forced him to take all his jewelry from him and also his horse Kanthaka.

Channa could not now refuse to do what his master commanded him, so with a heavy heart and weeping sorely, he turned back along the white moonlit road to the city leading Kanthaka by the bridle to take the sad news to Kapilavatthu that his beloved master, their prince, at last as he long had threatened, had left parents and wife and children and kingdom behind him, and had gone away to be a wanderer without a home.

In this way it was that at the age of twenty-nine, in the full flush of early manhood, while still black-haired and young and strong, Prince Siddhattha Gotama of the noble house of the Sakya race, went forth from home into homelessness, in order to seek for himself and for all men, some way whereby he and they might win forever beyond the reach of all ill, all distress, all grief, all sorrow, all despair.

V
Compassion

AFTER a short period of quiet reflection in a grove near the river bank where he had parted from Channa, the young Prince who was now only a wandering beggar, turned his steps southward towards the Magadha country, and in due time reached the chief city of that country, Rajagaha by name, where the King of the country, Bimbisara, had his principal palace. Here, with begging bowl in hand, Siddhattha went round the streets of the city, begging his food from door to door like any other religious mendicant. But he did not look like a common beggar. Those who saw him pass along could see by his very look that he was no ordinary religious mendicant, and they put into his bowl the best food they had.

When he had gathered enough, the prince-beggar left the city again, and in a retired spot outside the walls, sat down to eat what he had collected. But O, what a meal it was! Never in his life before had he, a prince by birth, and accustomed to the best of food served up in the most attractive and tempting way, had such a mixed mess as this set before him. His stomach simply turned in disgust at the sight of that bowl full of scraps and portions of all kinds of different foods, all flung together into one dish. He simply could not bring himself to eat the repulsive mixture. He wanted to throw it away and eat nothing rather than such a mess.

And then he stopped and began to think: and this is what he thought and said to himself:

"Siddhattha, you were born of a good family, in a king's house, where you got everything good to eat that you could wish, the very best of rice, the richest and tastiest of curries, in all abundance. But in spite of this you made up your mind deliberately to live the life of a homeless beggar, and fare the same as every such beggar fares on what-ever was given you by the charitable. And you carried out your resolve: you became a homeless beggar: yet now, what are you doing? You do not want to eat the food proper for homeless beggars to eat — the food that is given them, whatever it may be. Do you think that is a right thing to do?"

In these and in other words the prince-beggar reasoned with himself, chiding and scolding himself for his daintiness and fastidiousness in the matter of food, so unfitting in a beggar. And in the end, after a struggle with himself, he succeeded in overcoming his repugnance to the food lying in his bowl before him, and he ate it up without further ado, and never afterwards had any more trouble about eating what was given him to eat.

Meanwhile, the people of Rajagaha, King Bimbisara's city, were all talking about the new religious mendicant who had been begging in their streets that

morning, he had looked so different from the common run of religious mendicants, so refined, so noble looking! The talk even reached the ears of King Bimbisara in his palace, and he sent his servants to make enquiries and find out who the stranger mendicant could be. Very soon his messengers learned all about Siddhattha, and came back and told their master that he was the eldest son of the King of the Sakyas, the heir to the throne; and that he had left everything behind him in order to become a beggar and try to discover if he could, some way that would lead men beyond the reach of old age and sickness and death. As his servants told King Bimbisara this, he listened to them very much perplexed. Never before had he heard of a religious mendicant looking for anything so strange, so extraordinary. But it sounded great and grand, and worthy of a prince's looking for it and perhaps is was not so impossible as it seemed, he thought. So he sent his men to ask the prince-beggar to stay in his city, and he would provide a place for him to live in, and food, and everything else he required for his comfort; and he could settle down there and study and meditate and carry on his search. But Siddhattha declined the King's kind offer, saying that he could not stay still anywhere until he had found what he sought. After he had found it, perhaps then he might be able to stay in one place. So then the King made him promise that when he had found what he was seeking, he would come and stay in his city and let him and his people know about it first.

So the prince-beggar left Rajagaha behind him, and passed upon his wandering way into the open country towards a hill on which a great many hermits were living from whom he thought he might be able to learn something about life and death and how all the ills connected with them might be overcome.

And as he went along the road, he saw a cloud of dust coming down the mountain side, and heard the patter of feet; and then out of the dust there came into sight a herd of sheep and goats making their way to the plain. But behind them all, painfully limping along, came a little lamb, its leg hurt, and bleeding, but still trying hard to keep up with its mates. And when Siddhattha saw it, and noticed how anxious about it the mother sheep was, his heart was filled with pity.

He picked up the little creature and walked alongside the rest of the sheep carrying the lame lamb in his arms. "Poor little thing," he said, speaking to the lamb, "I was going to join the hermits on the hills, but it is at least as good a deed to ease your little heart of suffering as to sit up there with these praying hermits."

Then he saw the men who were driving the herd and he asked them where they were going and why they were driving their flocks away from pasture in the heat of the day instead of in the cool of the evening. They answered him that they had been ordered to bring a hundred sheep and a hundred goats down to the city during the day in order that they might be on hand and ready for the great sacrifice that was going to be offered that night by the King. "I will go with you," said the prince-beggar; and he walked along with them and their flock, still carrying the lame lamb in his arms.

And now, as he came near to the riverside, a young woman came up to him, and after saluting him with great respect, said to him: "O Reverend Lord, have pity on me and tell me where I shall be able to find that seed which keeps away death."

Siddhattha looked at her as if he would ask her what she meant.

The woman noticed his look, and went on:

“Do you not remember, Lord? Yesterday I brought you my little son who was sick, so sick that he was near to dying, and asked your reverence if there was no medicine at all that would keep him alive, for he is my only son. And your reverence said yes, there was something that might save him from dying, if I could get it — a tola’s weight of black mustard seed got from a house in which no one ever had died.”

“And did you get that seed, sister?” said Siddhattha with a tender, wistful smile.

“Nay, Lord, I did not,” said the woman sadly. “I went round all our village to every house asking for black mustard seed, and everybody was very willing to give me some, but when I told them that I only wanted it from them if no one had ever died in their house, they said that that was a queer thing for me to say, for everybody knew there had been a death in their house, and sometimes more then one death. Some said a slave had died with them. In some houses it was the father who had died; in some the son; in some the mother; in some the daughter. But in every home, every house, some one had died. I could not get my seed. O Reverend Sir, tell me where I may get that seed before my little son dies. Are there no homes at all where death has not been?”

“You have said it,” Siddhattha answered the now weeping woman. “In all the wide world there are no homes where death has not been. Now you have found this out for yourself. Now you know that yours is not the only grief in the world. Now you know with your own knowledge that all the world weeps along with you for some dear one dead. Go home and bury your child. As for me, sister, I go to find if I can, what will put an end to your and all men’s sorrow; and if I find it, I will come again and tell it to you.”

So Siddhattha passed on his way and entered the city along with the herd of animals that were going to be killed, and still went with them right up to the palace where the sacrifice was to be made. Here the King was standing with the priests all round him chanting their hymns to the gods; and soon the altar fires were lit and the priests made ready to kill the animals that had now arrived. But just as the chief priest was about to plunge his knife into the throat of the first goat that had been picked for the sacrifice, Siddhattha stepped forward and stopped him. “No, Maharaja,’ he said to King Bimbisara, “do not let the priest strike that poor goat.” And before any one knew what he was going to do, he untied the rope of grass with which it was fastened, and let it go back to its mates. And no one, not even the King nor the chief priest, thought of trying to stop him from doing it, so great and noble did he look as he set the goat free and allowed it to run back to the rest of its fellows.

Then the Prince-beggar began to speak to the King and the priests and all who had gathered there to see the great sacrifice of blood, about what a wonderful thing life is; how anybody can destroy it, but how impossible it is for any one to restore it once it has been destroyed. Every creature that lives, so he told those round him, is fond of its life, fears to die, just as much as men do. Why then should men use their power over these poor brothers of theirs only to rob them of

what man himself is most fond of — the wonderful thing, life. If men wish to receive mercy, he said, they ought to show mercy. If men kill, then according to the law that rules in the world, they will be killed. And what kind of gods, he asked them, can they be who are pleased with and take delight in blood? Certainly not good gods, he said. Rather they must be demons to take pleasure in suffering and death. No, he ended, if men wish to taste happiness themselves in the hereafter, they must not cause unhappiness to any living creature, even the meanest, here in this world. Those who sow the seed of unhappiness, of pain and suffering, will certainly have to reap a full-grown crop of the same in the future.

In this way did Siddhattha speak to the King and the priests and people of Rajagaha, and did it so gently and kindly, and yet so powerfully, that the minds and hearts of the King and the priests were quite changed. There and then the King issued an order that henceforth throughout the whole of his Kingdom there were to be no more sacrifices in which living creatures were deprived of life. After this day, everybody in his realm, King and priests and people alike, were to offer to the gods only such gifts as did not involve the taking of any living creature's life. They were only to offer as sacrifices to gods, flowers and fruits and cakes, and other similarly bloodless offerings.

And now once more King Bimbisara begged Siddhattha to stay in his kingdom and teach him and his people the good way of kindliness and pity and compassion towards everything that has life. The prince-beggar thanked him for his kind offer but told him that he had not yet found what he was seeking, and until he had found it, he could not rest, but must still go on searching for it everywhere among all the wise men of India, in case any of them knew or in any way could help him in his search.

VI
First Endeavors

IN THOSE days in ancient India there were very, many different teachers of religion, the same as there are now, who took pupils and taught these pupils all they themselves knew. One of these religious teachers, well known for his knowledge and attainments, was called Alara Kalama, and to this teacher Siddhattha now went in order to learn what he had to teach. And Siddhattha stayed with Alara Kalama a long time and studied under him and practiced the practices his master taught him so diligently that at length he had learned and practiced everything his master knew and practiced. And his master Alara Kalama thought so highly of him and of his great ability that one day he said to him: "Now you know everything I know. Whether you teach my doctrine or whether I teach it, it is all the same. You are the same as I: I am the same as you. There is no difference between us. Stay with me and take my place as teacher to my disciples along with me."

"But have you nothing more you can teach me?" said Siddhattha. "Can you not teach me the way to get beyond the reach of life and death?"

"No," said Alara Kalama. "That is a thing I do not know myself, so how can I teach it to you? I do not believe that anybody in the whole world knows that."

Alara Kalama only knew what he had already taught Siddhattha — the way to a state of consciousness called "the realm of neither perception nor non-perception," which was a very high state of consciousness, but one which does not save the man who reaches it from the necessity of being born, and therefore of growing old, and falling ill, and eventually dying, over and over again. So, very much disappointed, Siddhattha left his master Alara Kalama, and went away again to wander this way and that throughout the country, looking for some one who knew and could teach him more than he had learned from Alara Kalama.

And after a time he came to hear of another famous teacher of the name of Uddaka, who was said by everybody to possess great knowledge and powers. So Siddhattha now went to this Uddaka and became his pupil and diligently studied and practiced under him until as with Alara Kalama, he was as clever and learned as his master, and knew and practiced all that his master knew and practiced. And Uddaka also, just like Alara Kalama, was so pleased with Siddhattha's quickness and ability, that he also wanted him to stay with him, and along with him become the leader and teacher of his band of disciples. And Siddhattha asked him the same question that he had asked of Alara Kalama. He asked him if he had no more to teach him, if he could not teach him how to overcome birth and death and all the disagreeable things connected with the same. But Uddaka was in the same position as Alara Kalama in this matter. He did not know how men could get out

of the round of birth and death altogether, and had never heard of any one who did know such a thing. So disappointed once more, Siddhattha took leave of Uddaka too, and made up his mind that he would not go to any more teachers to ask about what he wanted to know but henceforth would try to find it out for himself, by his own labor and efforts.

Now it was quite a common thing then in India, as indeed it still is to-day, for those men who leave their homes and follow a religious life to imagine that by going without food and making their bodies uncomfortable and miserable in a number of other ways, that they would earn the right to a long period of peace and happiness hereafter in the world of the gods. They thought that if only a man made himself unhappy enough here, he would make sure of being happy hereafter; and that the more unhappy he made himself now, the more happy he would be in the future. And they carried out this belief of theirs in actual practice just as many of them still do in India to-day.

Some of them reduced the quantity of food they ate, little by little, day after day, until at last they were eating hardly anything at all, so that their poor bodies became mere skin and bones. Some practiced standing on one leg all the time until it turned stiff and lifeless with the continual strain. Others held one arm up in the air all the time until it withered and dried up through the blood not flowing into it properly in that unnatural position. Others, again, held their fists tightly clenched, never letting them loose, until the nails at the ends of their fingers actually grew into the palms of their hands, and through the flesh, and out at the backs of their hands! Others never lay down at night except on a bed of thorns, or else on a board with sharp nails all over it, their points sticking upwards.

And Siddhattha, because he was anxious and determined to find out what he wanted to know, and did not care how much trouble and pain he had to go through if only at last he might succeed, did very much the same as these other ascetics who were seeking religious truth. He did not know any better way than to do just as the others did. He honestly hoped and believed that if only he tortured and tormented his body enough, at last as reward he would obtain enlightenment of mind.

Here is part of the story of what he did in those days, as he told it himself in after years to one of his foremost disciples, the Thera Sariputta.

"I practiced the holding in of my breath," said the Buddha to Sariputta, "until it made a great roaring in my ears, and gave me a pain in my head as if some one was boring into it with a sharp sword, or lashing me over the head with a leather whip. In my body also, I suffered pains as if a butcher were ripping me up with a knife, or some one had flung me into a pit of red-hot coals.

"And then I practiced loneliness. On the nights of the new moon and of the full moon, I went out to lonely places among the trees where the dead lay buried, and stayed there all the night through hearing the leaves rustling and the twigs dropping when a breeze blew, with my hair all standing on end with fright. When a bird came and lighted on a bough, or a deer or other animal came running past, I shook with terror, for I did not know what it was that was coming up to me in the dark. But I did not run away. I made myself stay there and face the fear and terror I felt until I had mastered it.

“I also went without food. I practiced eating only once a day, then only once in two days, then only once in three days, and so on until I was only eating once in fourteen days. I have lived eating nothing but grass, nothing but moss, wild fruits and roots, wild herbs and mushrooms, wild rice, and the dust I scraped up of thrashing floors. I covered my body only with garments made out of rags from graveyards and dust-heaps, with old skins of animals that had died in the fields, with woven grass, with patches made of birds’ wings and tails that I found lying here and there.

“In the lonely forests I lived alone never seeing a human being for weeks and months. In winter, when it was cold at night, I stayed out in the open without a fire to keep me warm. And in the day-time, when the sun came out, I hid myself among the cold trees. And in the burning heat of summer, I stayed out by day in the open under the hot sun; and at night I went into the close, stifling thickets.

“I also practiced what was called ‘purification by food’. I lived on nothing but beans, then on nothing but sesamum seed, then on nothing but rice. And I reduced the quantity I ate of these day by day, until at last I was eating only one bean a day, one sesamum seed a day, one grain of rice a day.

“And through eating so little food, my body became terribly thin and lean. My legs became like reeds, my hips like camel’s hoofs. My backbone stood out on my back like a rope, and on my sides my ribs showed like the rafters of a ruined house. My eyes sank so far in my head that they looked like water at the bottom of a deep well and almost disappeared altogether. The skin of my head grew all withered and shrunken like a pumpkin that has been cut and laid out in the sun. And when I tried to rub my arms and legs to make them feel a little better, the hair on them was so rotted at the roots that it all came away in my hands.

“And yet, Sariputta, in spite of all these pains and sufferings, I did not reach the knowledge I wanted to reach, because that knowledge and insight was not to be found that way, but could only be got by profound reasoning and reflection, and by turning away from everything in the world.”

In this way, for six or seven long years, Siddhattha put his body to all kinds of torment, thinking that by doing this, if only he went on long enough, at last he would get to know what he wanted, all the while wandering about here and there through the country of Northern India.

At length, in the course of these wanderings, he came to the land of Magadha again, to a nice quiet place in a bamboo grove beside a broad, smooth-flowing river, with a good bathing-place, and a village close by where he could easily go and beg food. He liked the look of this place as soon as he saw it. “This is a good place to stay in,” he said to himself, “for any ascetic like myself who wants to strive and struggle for knowledge. Here I will stay.”

So in this place, called Uruvela, Siddhattha now took up his fixed residence, under the trees meditating and striving hard, fasting and otherwise treating his poor body very badly, all in the hope that by such pains and endeavors he would gain a knowledge of the truth he sought.

Meanwhile there had gathered round him a little band of disciples who admired him very much as they saw how he starved himself and otherwise made himself undergo severe hardships. And these disciples, five in number, waited

upon him and attended to his few wants, for they thought that an ascetic who could make himself suffer such pains and privations, and persevere in them as did Siddhattha, must be no common man. They thought, indeed, they felt sure, that an ascetic with so much endurance and determination, must be certain to get what he was looking for, and that when he had found it, then he would tell it to them, his pupils and followers.

But one day it happened that as he sat alone under a tree, the poor prince-ascetic, all worn out with fasting and hardships, and added to that, the strain of intense and prolonged meditation, fell down in a dead faint, and lay there on the ground so completely exhausted and without strength that perhaps he would never have risen again but died there just where he lay. Fortunately, however, a boy who was watching some goats near by happened to come along by the tree under which Siddhattha lay in a swoon; and when he saw the holy man lying there, the boy at once guessed that he was dying for want of proper food, for everybody round about knew that he was a very holy man, and went without food for days and days. So the boy ran back to his goats and brought up one of them, and milked some milk from its teats into the half-open mouth of the holy man, without touching him with his hands, for he did not dare, he a common herd-boy, to lay his hands on a saint.

Very soon the good, fresh milk began to produce its effect upon the half-dead Siddhattha. After a little while he was able to sit up, feeling very much better than he had felt for a long time. And he began to think about why it was he had fainted, and why he was now feeling so much refreshed in body and mind. And these are the thoughts that passed through his mind:

"O how foolish I have been! I left my wife and family and home and everything, and became a homeless wanderer because I wanted to get to know the truth about man's life and how he must live it to the best purpose. But in order to gain a knowledge so difficult to gain as this, I needed to have a brain and a mind as strong and vigorous as I possibly could get, so that I might be able to think and meditate steadily and strongly. And then I went and made my body weak and wretched with starvation and those other practices I practiced! But how can a man have a strong and healthy mind if his body is weak and miserable and unhealthy? O how foolish I have been to make myself weak just when I need all the strength I can get to carry through the great task I have set myself to perform! After this I shall eat all the food my body requires to keep it in god condition. I shall not eat too much, for that will make me dull and heavy and sleepy, and then I shall not be able to think and meditate properly. But I shall eat enough to keep me well and strong, so that I may have a clear, unclouded mind, and so perhaps, at last, I shall be able to gain the truth I want to reach."

So, with thoughts like this in his mind, Siddhattha turned to the goat-herd boy who now was kneeling before him in veneration, and asked him if he would kindly give him a little more of his goat's milk in a dish, as it was doing him very much good.

"O Reverend Lord," said the boy, "I cannot do that. I cannot give you milk in a dish that has been touched by my hand. I am only a common herd-boy of low

caste, and you are a holy man, a Brahmin. If I were to touch you with anything I had touched, it would be a crime."

But Siddhattha replied: "My dear boy, I am not asking you for caste: I am asking you for milk. There is no real difference between us two, even although you are a goat-herd and I am a hermit. It is blood that flows in the veins of both of us. If some robbers were to come and cut us both with swords, the blood that would flow from both our bodies would be of the same red color. And if it went on running and nobody stopped it, we should both of us die with no difference between us. If a man does high and noble deeds, then he is a high and noble man. And if a man does low and ignoble deeds, then he is a low and ignoble man. That is all the real caste there is. You have done a good kind deed in giving me milk when I was almost dead for want of food; therefore you are of good caste to me. Give me some more milk in a dish."

The herd-boy did not know what to say to these strange but so very pleasant words from this extraordinary hermit who did not send him away from him because he was a low-caste herd-boy, but instead wanted more milk from him, and would take it out of a dish. But he went off, and soon came back with a bowl full of his best goat's milk which he joyfully offered to the kind hermit who had told him that he was of as good a caste to him. Then he took back his empty bowl, and after bowing down before the hermit and asking his blessing, went back glad and happy to his goats.

But the prince-ascetic, now thoroughly refreshed with the good drink of milk, sat on beneath the tree, meditating more successfully than he had done for a long time. And as he still sat there in the dark after the sun had gone down, he heard the sound of girls' voices singing. It was a band of professional singers and dancers going to a neighboring town to give an entertainment; and as they passed along close to where he sat, he distinctly heard the words of their song which was about the instrument they played when they sang, called a lute. They were saying, in their song, that if the strings of the lute were hung too slack, they made very poor music; and if they were stretched too tight, then they broke and made no music at all. Therefore, so they sang, it was best to stretch the strings neither too slack nor too tight, but just medium, and then they would give proper music.

"That is true what these girls sing," thought the prince-ascetic as he heard them. "These girls have taught me something. I have been stretching the strings of my poor body far too tight this long time, and they have come very near to breaking altogether. If that boy had not come and brought me the milk to-day, I should have died, and then what would have become of my search for the Truth? There and then it would have come to an end. My search for that which I and all men need to know would have failed miserably just for want of a little food for my body. This harsh way of treating the body cannot be the proper way to find Truth. I will give it up at once and treat my body with proper care and attention henceforth."

So when, next day, a young woman called Sujata, who lived near by, came to him in his hermitage among the trees with a bowl full of extra good rice boiled with very good rich milk, which she had specially prepared for him, saying as she gave it to him: "May you be successful in obtaining your wishes as I have been!"

He did not refuse her gift, but accepted it with pleasure, and felt the benefit of it at once in a greatly strengthened body and mind.

After this, Siddhattha went out again every morning to the village to beg food, and eating what he got there each day, he soon became strong again and his skin became a good color, almost as clear and golden as it used to be in the old days when he lived in his father's palace.

But although he himself now saw that the pains and hardships to which he subjected himself were just like trying to tie air into knots, or weave ropes out of soft sand, for all the help it was to him in his search for the Truth, the five disciples who believed in him and had hitherto stayed with him through everything did not think this at all. They still believed, like everybody else in India in those days, that the one only way to find the Truth in religious matters was to make yourself miserable in body.

So when they saw the master and teacher they had hitherto admired, so much for the way in which he starved and in other ways ill-treated and tormented his body, beginning to eat all his body required of the rice and curry he got when he went out begging, they were very much disappointed with him, and they said among themselves: "Ah, this Sakya ascetic has given up striving and struggling. He has gone back to a life of ease and comfort." And the whole five of them turned away from their old master and left him, for they felt sure that there was no use in staying any longer with a teacher who did not starve himself and in other ways make himself miserable. Such an ascetic, they were sure, could never possibly attain to any great knowledge of religious truth.

How very much mistaken, how very far wrong, these five disciples of the prince-ascetic were, was soon made clear to them. Their master and teacher, far from having turned back from his goal, was now on the very point of reaching it.

VII
Success

Any one to-day who wishes to see the very spot where, twenty-five hundred years ago, Prince Siddhattha of the Sakya race at last found the Truth he had sought so long and with such painful efforts, need only go to the town of Buddha Gaya in Behar, and from there walk six or seven miles along a road which more or less follows the course of a broad, sandy stream now called the river Phalgu, but which in those days was called the Neranjara. As he comes near his destination, he will see rising above the neighboring flat fields on a slight elevation, a tall solid structure of dark stone, with a few terraces running round its oblong form, which rises into the air, growing smaller and smaller towards the top where there is a small open platform from which rises a spire of stone, of the solid Hindu pattern, the whole structure being decorated with a great variety of sculptured work of all descriptions. This is the celebrated monument of Buddha Gaya. And in the shadow of this great memorial structure, surrounded by a low stone wall, the visitor yet may see the tree beneath whose branches Prince Siddhattha at last obtained the light he sought; for it was towards this tree that he turned his steps one evening, having resolved to make one last mighty effort of mind and will, and penetrate the final secret of life and all existence.

And as he went towards that tree — in memory of Siddhattha's great achievement ever since called the Bodhi Tree, or Tree of Enlightenment — Sujata's words to him must have been in his ears: "May you be successful in obtaining your wishes as I have been!" For now he sat down beneath the tree and made a solemn vow to himself that even if all the blood in his veins dried up, and all his flesh wasted away, and nothing was left of his body but skin and sinews and bones, from this seat he would not rise again until he had found what he sought, reached his goal, discovered for himself and for all men the way by which they might gain the highest happiness, be delivered once and for all from the need to be born and to die, again and again in a wearisome, never-ending round of the same pleasures and pains, over and over again. He sat down there under the Bodhi Tree, resolved to sit there, no matter what might happen to him, until he had discovered the way that leads out of Samsara, the world of birth and death and change, to the constant, lasting, deathless state called Nibbana.

This was a tremendous resolve to make. It had never been made before by any mortal man of our epoch of the world. There were indeed many other ascetics and hermits in Siddhattha's native land of India, who had spent long years of bodily hardship and severe mental labor, in order to obtain what they thought was the highest good possible. But what they won after all their years of toil and struggle of mind and will, was the attainment of a very great happiness, only it was not a

constant, lasting happiness. It was not permanent. It was not for ever secure against all chance and change. After a time, when the energy they had put forth in order to bring them to these high states of bliss in the heaven-worlds was all exhausted; all spent, then these people, these ascetics and hermits, fell down again from these blissful states to lower states of existence, to life on this earth again, with all its unpleasantness and disappointments. It was with them as it might be with a man who had gathered together a lot of money in a box, and started spending it all. Very soon it would all be spent, the box would be empty, and he would have to begin getting more. And so with these hermits and ascetics, if they wanted to enjoy great happiness again, they had to begin all over again the painful things they had done before, so as to get to the heaven-world again and enjoy its delights. And this they would have to do again and again as long as they wanted such delights. Again and again they would have to go through a course of misery endured on earth so as to get happiness in heaven, and then the same again, always and always, without any end. Their way of doing was like that of a man who with great trouble rolls a heavy ball to the top of a high hill, only to find it roll back to the bottom again; whereupon he has to go through all the labor of rolling it up the hill again, and has to do this over and over again, without any end to his labor.

But what Siddhattha wanted was to find some way by which he and all men would not need any more to be for ever rolling the ball of life to the top of some high peak of happiness, see it roll down again into the valley of unhappiness, and then have all their work to do over again, if they wanted happiness again; and this for ever and ever, without any end to it. He wanted to find some state that would be permanent and lasting, some kind of wellbeing that would not be lost again, so that those who reached it once, would not need any more to be always striving and struggling to get it again. And on this great night under the Bodhi Tree at Uruvela he was determined to find such a state of lasting wellbeing, or perish in trying to find it. And now when Siddhattha wished to give the whole force of his mind to this great work, his mind fought against his will, and turned itself to dwell upon all the unlasting, all the passing, temporary delights and pleasure of life that he ever had tasted. He wanted to leave aside whole thoughts of worldly things, and concentrate all his attention upon trying to find out how all things arise, but his thoughts, in spite of all he could do, turned back to his former pleasant life, and brought before his mind's eye the most attractive pictures of the happy life he used to live in his father's palace before he came out on this painful search for Truth.

Again he saw before the eye of his mind, the splendid rooms and halls of his palace, its beautiful grounds and gardens, its lovely lotus-ponds and bowers of delight; and the many attendants who had nothing else to do but wait upon his will and minister to his pleasure. And then he saw his beautiful young wife; her lovely pleading eyes, her pleasant charming ways rose before him in vision; her very voice, so low and sweet, sounded in his ears. And then he saw his little son, his only child, a merry little babe who might grow up to be a son of which any father might be proud. And he saw his father, too, grey-haired now, and getting on in years, and grieving that his eldest son was not beside him to help him to govern

the country and take his place when soon he would have to give it up through sheer old age.

With his mind's eye the prince-ascetic Siddhattha Gotama saw all this, and his heart misgave him as the thought he did not wish to think, forced itself into his mind:

"You might have had great glory and power as a famous king if you had stayed in household life like everybody else. But you have gone and left behind you all that sensible people prize and value, in search of something nobody but yourself has ever even thought about, something that perhaps never can be found at all, perhaps does not even exist for anybody to find! How do you know you are not a fool or a madman to leave behind all these real, solid things you certainly once had and enjoyed, to look for something you cannot even be sure exists for you to find?

"But even if you so want to leave the good things of the world behind you and go in search of something beyond them which you think is better, why could you not continue to search for it in the same way that other religious men search by fasting and mortification and the other religious practices all the other ascetics and religious men of the country follow? Is it likely that they are all wrong in their way of looking for religious truth, and that only you are right? And any way, why cannot you be content to gain the same kind of happiness they are content to gain, even if it is not as lasting as you would like it to be?

"Life is short. Men soon die: soon you too will die. Why do you not use the little time you have to live in getting all the pleasure you can out of it before the night of death comes on, when you cannot have pleasure any more? There is love: there is fame: there is glory: there is the praise of man: all to be had if you try for them: all solid, certain things: all of them things you can feel, not dreams and visions made out of thin air. Why should you make yourself wretched in this lonely forest looking for something nobody has ever found?"

Thus did Siddhattha's thoughts torment him on that great night when he sat down beneath the Bodhi Tree to seek the way of deliverance from birth and death, tormenting him with the keen memory of the pleasures he had left behind, with doubts about his power ever to find what he sought, with uncertainty about whether he was seeking it in the right way. But he did not allow himself to be turned from his purpose. Rather did he the more strenuously pull his mind together for a yet stronger effort to discover what he wanted.

"Begone, Mara, Evil One!" he cried. "I know you who you are. You are the evil spirit that would keep men back from everything that is good and great and noble. Try no more to keep me back from what I have set out and am determined to do. My mind is made up. Here I sit until I have found what I seek, even if I have to sit until all the blood in my body dries up, and my flesh wastes all away, and nothing is left of my but dry skin and bone."

And there Siddhattha sat and still continued sitting, striving and struggling, laboring and wrestling with all his mind and will to find what would bring to an end all infelicity, all undesirable and unpleasant things, searching for what would end all evil things for ever, and bring in their place a wellbeing, a happiness that

would not pass away, a felicity that would be sure and lasting, eternally beyond the reach of any change.

And he was successful. After a time as he still persisted in his meditations, putting away out of his thoughts all evil things that were trying to disturb him and distract his mind, at length his mind became still and quiet like a still and quiet lake. It ceased to trouble him with memories and suggestions of pleasures he once had owned and enjoyed. It vexed him no more with doubts and uncertainties about what he now was seeking. In the calm, close concentration of his mind, now wholly calmed and collected, in the intense power of his will now directed towards one thing only, there where he sat under the Bodhi Tree, Prince Siddhattha, the ascetic of the face of the Sakyas, of the family of Gotama, became the Enlightened One, the Awakened One, the All-Knowing One; he became Gotama the Buddha, the bringer of the light of truth to the men of this epoch of the world, to the whole human race that now lives on the earth. For now He was enlightened in a way compared with which all other men were stumbling and groping in the dark. Now He was awake in a way compared with which all other men are asleep and dreaming. Now He knew with a knowledge compared with which all that other men know is but a kind of ignorance.

For now He had penetrated the real true meaning of life through and through from its root upward. Now He knew how and why men were born and died again and again, and how they might cease thus to suffer repeated birth and death. But the first thing He saw clearly with His new and penetrating insight this night as He sat meditating under the Bodhi Tree, was the long line of His own lives and deaths through ages after ages, in all kinds of bodies, in all kinds of conditions of life, low and high, humble and exalted, gross and refined, until at last He was born in this present life as the son of King Suddhodana and Queen Mahamaya.

Then with His keen, penetrating power of mind, He next perceived how all men are born and pass away again, to be born elsewhere anew, strictly according to the deeds they do. He saw how some are born to happy lives because their deeds were good deeds; and He saw how others were born to lives of unhappiness because the deeds they did were evil. He saw as plainly as anything that it is men’s own actions and nothing else whatever which make them happy or unhappy in this and in all worlds.

And then, last and greatest of all He saw on this great night, He saw and understood clearly, beyond all doubt, that is it not well for men always to be at the mercy of the continual changes of the world; that it is not good that they should be now happy and now unhappy, now up and now down, like boats tossed on a sea. He perceived that the reason why men come in to existence to be thus tossed about on the waves of the changing world, is because they are fond of, and cling to all the little bits of happiness that existence in the world provides at times. He saw that men are caught in the snare of existence in the world because like deer they fling themselves greedily upon any little bit of pleasure they see. Then He saw that if men do not want to be caught in the snare of existence, the only way for them to do is not to jump heedlessly upon every scrap of pleasure they see, not to abandon themselves recklessly to its enjoyment, not to set their hearts so eagerly upon the things existence offers. And then He saw the Way by following

which men at length would be able to refrain from flinging themselves recklessly into enjoyment of pleasure, because they would have learnt to know and like something better, and so they would no longer be bound to come back to the world where such pleasures are found, to the world of change and disappointment and uncertain happiness, and would be able to attain the true and certain happiness of Nibbana. And this Way or Path, He called the Noble Eightfold Path, because it is the Path followed by everybody who has noble aims and desires; and it has eight distinct branches or parts or members.

The first branch or part or member of this Noble Eightfold Path to deliverance from all things evil taught by the Buddha is called — Right Seeing. This Right Seeing means, to see that everything in the world, even one's own existence, is changeable, not really solid and lasting, and so only leads to disappointment and pain when we cling to it too closely. Right Seeing also means to see that good deeds always lead to happiness and evil deeds to unhappiness, both here and hereafter.

The second member of the Noble Eightfold Path was called by the Buddha — Right Mindedness. This means an attitude which, because it sees rightly the nature of the world and everything in it, turns away from clinging tightly to it. Right Mindedness also means a right attitude of mind in which we have pity and compassion for all beings who, through clinging too close to worldly things, are suffering distress of body or mind, while at the same time we have a keen desire to relieve their suffering and help them as far as possible.

Right Speaking, the third part of the Buddha's Noble Eightfold Path, means speaking only what is true and kindly and sensible. It means to avoid lying and rude and slanderous and silly talk.

Right Doing, the fourth part of the Noble Eightfold Path, means to refrain from killing, and stealing, and impurity, and the drinking of intoxicating liquors which make men mad and reckless so that they do things they otherwise would never have done.

Right Living, the fifth part of the Eightfold Path, means earning one's living in any way that does not cause hurt or harm to any other living creature.

Right Endeavor the sixth part of the Noble Eightfold Path, means endeavoring, trying to control one's thoughts and feelings in such a way that bad, harmful thoughts and feelings may not arise, and that those which unhappily may have arisen, may die out. It also means trying to keep alive and strong in our minds all good and helpful thoughts and feelings that already are there and causing to arise in our minds and hearts as many as we can of new, good and helpful thoughts and feelings.

Right Remembering, the seventh member of the Noble Eightfold Path, means always remembering, never forgetting, what our bodies really are, not thinking of them as finer and grander than they are actually. It also means remembering all the movements and actions and functions of the body as being just the movements and actions and functions of the body, and nothing else beside. Right Remembering also means remembering what our minds are, a constantly changing succession of thoughts and feelings in which nothing is the same for two moments together. And it means, lastly, bearing in mind and never forgetting the

various steps Buddha has taught us we must take in order to set the mind free from all bondage and bring it at last to the state of perfect freedom — Nibbana.

And Right Concentration, the eight and last member of this Noble Eightfold Way to Nibbana made known by the Buddha means not allowing our minds to wander about as they like, but fixing them firmly upon whatever we are thinking about, so as to arrive in this way at a correct understanding or whatever we are trying to understand.

Such are all the eight parts or members of the Noble Eightfold Path which Prince Siddhattha Gotama, who now became the Buddha Gotama, discovered under the Bodhi Tree at Uruvela twenty-five hundred years ago. The last three parts or members, Right Endeavoring, Right Remembering and Right Concentration, in their full and perfect meaning are mainly intended to be practiced by men who are trying to follow the Buddha closely, and in order to do this better and more easily, have left the household life and become Bhikkhus. But every one, whether he is a Bhikkhu or not, can practice them to a certain extent as they are here described.

The first two members of the Eightfold Path, also, Right Seeing and Right Mindedness, in their full perfection are only possessed by those men who, after many years of training and practice of meditations, at last have come very near to understanding and realizing the true nature of things in the same way that the Buddha did. Yet still, every one who wishes to follow the Buddha, must have a little of Right Seeing, and a little of Right Mindedness. They must think sometimes how all things round them are not really so fine and splendid as they often seem to be. And they must sometimes entertain in their minds the thought that some day they will turn away from the transient things of the world to something better, to something more sure and lasting.

But the three middle members of the Noble Eightfold Path are for everybody to practice to the fullest extent of their powers. Everyone ought to try to live without doing harm to any one either in word or in act. Every one ought to try, and can try to avoid wrong-speaking and wrong-doing; and according as they do this, they prepare the way for some day controlling their thoughts and properly training their minds, and so coming at last to true knowledge and insight, that knowledge and insight which the Buddha discovered and teaches, which is truly called Wisdom.

And when they come to this true wisdom, then the mind is delivered from clinging any more to anything in any world. And because it does not cling any more to such things, therefore it does not any more for ever take shape or form in any world. That is to say: For if there is no more being born into the world, and so no more of all the troubles and unpleasant things that follow men who are born into the world; and so the whole mass of distress of any kind is brought to an end for ever. All this the Buddha discovered beneath the Bodhi Tree: He discovered the Noble Eightfold Path of Right Seeing and Right Mindedness, of Right Speaking and Doing and Living, of Right Endeavoring and Remembering and Concentration, which is also called by the name of the Triple Path of Right Behavior, Mind-culture and Wisdom; or in the Pali, Sila, Samadhi, and Pañña.

VIII
Making Known the Teaching

As a man who long has struggled to swim across a wide and stormy water and at length after much effort reaches the safe shore, lies down awhile to rest his wearied limbs and look back with satisfaction on the dangers he has safely passed, as a man who has climbed into the cool pleasant air of a high mountain slope, when he gets there turns round, pleased and contented, and looks down upon the hot, dusty plain whose stifling air he had left behind, so now, his long toil past, his labors successfully accomplished, there in the quiet wood of Uruvela the victor in this fierce fight, rested Himself for a time, enjoying the relief of release from toil and labor, tasting in peace well-won, the fruits of truth and knowledge He had gained. Then having rested Himself sufficiently beneath the tree of victory, Siddhattha Gotama, now and henceforth Gotama the Buddha, passed from under that tree and went towards another near by under which the goatherds of the place were accustomed to take shelter from the sun while they watched their flocks.

As He sat resting here, a Brahmin happened to come past that way, and after the usual greetings to the ascetic under the goatherd's tree, he said to Him, "Gotama, what makes a man a real Brahmin? What qualities does he require to possess in order really to be a man of the highest caste?"

And the Buddha, taking no notice of the proud Brahmin's rudeness in addressing Him by His family name of Gotama without any title of courtesy before it such as "reverend Sir," or the like, pointedly replied to him in this verse:

"The Brahmin who has put away all evil, Has put off pride, is self-restrained and pure, Has learning, follows out the Holy life, He alone has the light to be called Brahmin, He nothing has to do with worldly thing."

And the Brahmin went away muttering to himself: "This ascetic Gotama knows me, this ascetic Gotama knows me."

A few days after this, while the Buddha was still staying under the goatherd's tree, two merchants who were going about the country selling their wares, came along the road, and seeing the ascetic sitting there under the goatherd's tree so calm and content, enjoying its fruits in the peace and quietude it has brought him, they offered Him an offering of the best food they had, and struck by His noble and majestic look, asked Him to accept them as believers in Him. These two merchants, whose names were Tapussa and Bhallika, were thus the first persons in the world who became the followers of the Buddha Gotama.

But now, having rested long enough, the Buddha began to think about what He should do next. He had found the Truth He sought, and now it seemed to Him that He ought not to keep such precious knowledge to Himself, but that He ought

to tell it to others, so that they too might taste the comfort it brought. This was what He thought at first. But then other thoughts came into His mind.

“This doctrine of mine is not a very easy doctrine to understand,” he said to himself. “It is deep and subtle. Only the thoughtful and reflective can grasp it fully so that it will do them good. But there are not many men who are thoughtful and reflective. The great majority of men do not want to take the trouble to think and reflect. They want something easy; something that will amuse and entertain them. Their minds are inclined only to what promises to give them pleasure and delight. They are altogether given over to love of pleasure. If I were to preach this doctrine to them, they would not know what I was talking about. They would not pay attention to me. I should only be giving myself trouble all for nothing.”

Thus did the Buddha consider within himself almost making up his mind not to tell the Truth He had found to anybody, but just to keep it and enjoy it by Himself, since it did not seem to Him that anybody else in the world would want to hear it or thank Him for telling them.

However He did not stop at this point in His reflections or else the world would not know as it does to-day, the Truth He taught. He went on to consider the matter further; and this is what He next thought:

“Yes, it is true that most of the people in the world, will not want to hear this Truth I have found, and would not understand it even if they did hear me tell about it, they are so fond of what is easy and pleasant and comfortable and costs them no trouble. But still, everybody in the world is not alike. There are sure to be some, not very many, but still some who are not satisfied with the way they are living now, who want to know more than they know now, who are not content to follow pleasure wherever it may lead them. What a pity it would be that I should know this Truth which would bring to these few comfort and happiness, if only they heard it, and yet never give them a chance to hear it! No, I shall not do like that. I shall go forth now and make known, to all men I meet, these Four Noble Truths, these Four Great Facts I have discovered, of Ill, and its Cause, and its Cure, and the Way in which it can be cured; and among the many I speak to, there will always be a few who will listen, and listening, understand me.

“Just as in a lotus pond where all kinds of lotus lilies are growing, pink and blue and white, many of them have grown only a little way about the muddy bottom of the pond; and some have grown half way up through the water; and some have reached the top of the water and rest there; but a few grown up so as to lift their blossoms right out of, and above the mud and water, into the open air and the sunshine. So there are some beings whose minds are much sunk in the mud of passions and desires; and there are some that are not so much sunk in that mud; while some, a few are only a little touched with the mud of passion. These last will be able to understand my teaching when they hear it. I will let them hear it. I will go forth now and preach it to all men everywhere.”

And then the Buddha began to consider who would be the best people to whom to tell His doctrine first, who would be the most likely to listen to Him and quickly understand what He said.

Then He thought about His old teacher Alara Kalama, and how learned and thoughtful, how quick in the brain, how pure in his life he was. And He said to himself: "I will go and tell Alara Kalama first. He will very quickly understand."

But as He was getting ready to go to Alara Kalama, some one came and told Him that Alara Kalama was dead. The Buddha was very sorry to hear this, for He felt sure that so good and so wise a man as His old teacher would have been sure to understand His doctrine as soon as he heard it. Then He began to think who else there was who would be likely to understand His doctrine. And the thought came to Him that perhaps the other teacher He had studied under in former days, Uddaka the disciple of Rama, would be a good person to whom to tell it, for Uddaka too, like Alara Kalama, was quick to understand anything new when he was told it. But when He made enquiry where Uddaka was staying, then He learned that he had died just the night before.

So once more He had to consider who among all those He once had known, would be most likely to listen to Him and understand the Truth He wanted to tell them. And then He remembered the five hermits who had waited upon Him and attended to Him so faithfully during the time when He was striving by Himself at Uruvela. After enquiring where they had gone to when they had left Him, He learned that they were staying in a deer-park near the city of Benares. So, rising up and leaving Uruvela, the Buddha set out to walk to Benares, about a hundred and fifty miles away, to find His former attendants and disciples and tell them what He had found. And wandering on day after day from place to place, at length one evening He drew near to the grove in the deer-park where those five ascetics were staying.

And they say Him approaching in the distance, and said to one another:

"Look yonder! There is that ascetic Gotama coming here — a luxurious fellow who gave up striving and fell back into a life of ease and comfort. Don't let us speak to Him! Don't let us show Him any respect! Let nobody go and offer to take His bowl or His extra robe from Him. We'll just leave a mat there for Him to sit on if He wants to, and if He doesn't want, He can stand. Who is going to attend on a good-for-nothing ascetic like Him!"

However, as the Buddha came nearer and nearer, they began to notice that somehow He was not the same as He used to be in the days when they had lived with Him and studied under Him. There now was something about Him, something noble and majestic, such as they never had seen before. And almost in spite of themselves, before they well knew what they were doing, they had forgotten all they had just agreed on as to how they were going to receive Him.

And one was hastening forward to meet Him, and respectfully taking His bowl and robe from Him, another busily preparing a seat for Him, while a third hurried off and brought Him water for His feet.

Then, after He had taken the seat offered Him, the Buddha spoke to them and said:

"Listen, ascetics. I have found the way to deathlessness. Let me tell you. Let me teach you. And if you listen and learn and practice as I instruct you, very soon you will know for yourselves, not in some future life but here and now in this

present lifetime that what I say is true. You will realize for yourselves the state that is beyond all lives and deaths."

Naturally the five ascetics were very much astonished to hear their old master and teacher talking like this. They had seen Him give His hard life of going without proper food and rest; they had seen Him cease, as they thought, from all efforts to find the Truth, and here He was actually coming to them and telling them that He had found the Truth! They simply did not believe Him; and they told Him so.

"Why, friend Gotama," they said, "when we were living with you, you practiced all sorts of stern austerities and bodily mortifications such as were practiced by no other ascetic we ever heard of in the whole of India, and that was why we took you for our master and teacher. Yet with all you did, you never found out the Truth you wanted to find. How is it possible you can have found it now when you are living a life of luxury, have ceased from striving, and turned to live in ease and comfort?"

But the Buddha replied: "You are mistaken, ascetics. I have not given up all efforts. I am not living a life of self-indulgence and idle comfort and ease. Listen to me. I really have attained supreme knowledge and insight. And I can teach it to you so that you also may attain to it and possess it for yourselves."

But still the five ascetics could not believe what their old teacher now was telling them. It seemed to them impossible that such a thing could be true, even though He begged them once more to listen to Him and believe what He said.

Then when He saw that they did not believe Him when He said He found the Deathless, He looked at them very earnestly, very seriously, and said:

"Listen, ascetics! In all the time that you used to be with me, did I ever say anything like this to you before? Did I ever before tell you that I had found the supreme knowledge and insight that leads beyond birth and death? Come, answer me!"

The five ascetics had to answer the Buddha that it was true He had never said anything like this to them before.

"Very well," urged the Buddha. "Listen to me now when I tell you that I really have found the way to deathlessness. And let me show you what I have found."

So gravely and impressively did the Buddha speak these words, so gravely and impressively did He look at them as He spoke, that the five ascetics found themselves unable any longer to refuse to listen to Him. They invited their old master and teacher to stay with them and teach them. So, day after day, during the next few months, the Buddha taught these five old disciples of His, the new Truth He had discovered. First He taught two out of the five, while the other three went out with their begging bowls to the city, and collected enough food for the whole six of them. Then these three stayed at the deer-park and were taught by the Buddha while the other two went out begging and brought back sufficient for them all. Thus the little party of the five pupils and their teacher lived happily together, He teaching, the other five busily learning and practicing, until in a short time (for they were all diligent pupils, and they had the best master and teacher in the world) the whole five of them, one after another, reached and realized for

themselves the Truth their Master had found. They came to know even while alive in this body, the state that is called Nibbana.

Out of these five ascetics, the one who was the first thus to learn and realize for himself what his Master taught, was called Kondañña. The names of the other four were, Bhaddaka, Assaji, Vappa, and Mahanama. These five ascetics were the first five Arahants that appeared in the world; for Arahant is the name that is given to one who in this life, in the body he now is in, comes to realize the state that cannot be touched by birth and death, the state that is called Nibbana. These five Arahants were the first members of the Sangha or Brotherhood of Bhikkhus who acknowledged the Buddha as master and teacher and guide for all their life.

While the Buddha thus was staying in the deer-park at Isipatana, there came to see Him a rich young man of the neighborhood called Yasa. And after the young man Yasa had heard the Buddha explain his teaching and what it led to, he was so well pleased with what he heard that he became a Bhikkhu there and then, and stayed on with the Buddha in order to hear and learn more.

But towards evening that day an elderly man came to where the Buddha was, and told Him that his son had left home that morning saying he was going to visit the Buddha, but he had not come again, and his mother was crying for him thinking that he must have been killed by robbers on the way. Then the Buddha told the man that his son had become a Bhikkhu; and He began to explain His doctrine to the new Bhikkhu's father. And so well did He speak that when He had ended, the father also asked to be allowed to become a Bhikkhu, the same as his son had done; and he too, stayed with the Buddha and did not return home. And next morning, when the Buddha and the new young Bhikkhu went to his mother's house for food, she was quite pleased to learn that her son and her husband had become disciples of so great a teacher, and she herself became a lay-follower of the Buddha.

After this, four close friends of young Yasa, when they saw what their companion had done, also did the same, and became Bhikkhus also, disciples of the Buddha Gotama, members of His Sangha. And in this way, more and more young men became Bhikkhus, until at last the Buddha had gathered round Him there at Isipatana, a body of about sixty young Bhikkhus, all of the best families, and all of them eager and diligent in study, and strenuous and persevering in practice under their Master's training, so that in no very long time, all of them had realized for themselves the supreme knowledge and insight, and become Arahants.

But the Buddha did not allow them to stay there with Him. Now that they had learned all He had to teach, He told them that now they must go out and teach others, so that these others who were ready to accept His teaching, might hear It and learn It, and be saved from all trouble and distress.

"Go forth," He said to them, "and make known the Teaching which is excellent in its beginnings, excellent in its progress, and excellent in its goal. Proclaim the perfect life, holy and pure. There are in the world beings not altogether blinded with the dust of passion and desire; and if they do not learn my doctrine, they will perish. They will listen to you: they will understand."

And the Buddha sent out these first sixty disciples, not in pairs nor in groups of three or four. He sent them out one by one, and each of them in a different direction, so as to make sure that His teaching should be spread as far and wide as possible. And these sixty Arahants did as their Master told them to do, and carried a knowledge of His Teaching and Discipline, North and South, and East and West. They were the first men in the world who went abroad into foreign countries for the sole purpose of spreading a knowledge of the religious truth they believed in. They were, in fact, the first duly appointed missionaries of a religion the world has seen.

And they were brave men, these first missionaries of the Buddha's religion.

One of them came to the Buddha and told Him that he wanted to be sent to a certain country where everybody knew the people were very wild and rough.

"But what will you do there, Bhikkhu," said the Buddha, when He heard his request, "if the people of the country abuse you and say all sorts of bad things about you."

"Then," answered the Bhikkhu, "I shall say to myself: 'These people are very good people; they only use their tongues to me; they do not beat me with their fists.'"

"But suppose they beat you with their fists, Bhikkhu, what will you do then?" asked the Buddha.

"Then I shall say to myself: 'These people are very good people; they do not thrash me with sticks,'" replied the Bhikkhu.

"But if they thrash you with sticks, what then?"

"Then I shall say that they are very good people; they do not cut me with swords."

"And if they cut you with swords?"

"Then I shall say they are very good, they do not kill me."

"But if they make to kill you, O Bhikkhu; what will you do then?" said the Buddha.

"Then Lord," said the Bhikkhu calmly, "I shall say to myself: 'These people are doing me a great favor, for this body of mine is an evil thing of which I shall be glad to be rid; and these good people are going to rid me of it.'"

Then the Buddha said:

"Go O Bhikkhu, and make known my Teaching among these people. Bhikkhus like you are the proper kind of Bhikkhus to publish abroad my Doctrine among all the peoples and nations of the world."

IX
Sigala

IN THE meantime the two merchants Tapussa and Bhallika, the first men in the world to call themselves the followers of the Buddha, had traveled on, and in the course of their journeying, come to Kapilavatthu. There they told everybody that they had seen Siddhattha the son of their king, at Uruvela, and that He had actually become, as had been prophesied, a very great religious teacher, indeed, the greatest religious teacher in the world, an Awakened One, a Buddha. And they said they had heard that He was coming soon to Kapilavatthu.

And, shortly after the Buddha had sent out the sixty Arahants to preach His Doctrine everywhere, He himself also left the deer-park at Isipatana, and turning Southwards in the direction of the Magadha country, at length came back to Uruvela. Here he stayed for a time, and entered into talk and discussions with a number of hermits who were living there under a leader called Kassapa. And after He had explained His Doctrine to them, Kassapa himself, their leader and teacher, accepted the Buddha's doctrine as true, and asked the Buddha to receive him into the Order of His Bhikkhus. And later on, by meditating and practicing as the Buddha taught him, he became an Arahant, and after the Buddha had passed away, he was one of the leading Arahants who maintained the doctrine in its original purity.

But now, leaving Uruvela, the Buddha wandered on through the country towards Rajagaha the capital city of Magadha, to keep His promise to its king, Bimbisara, that when He had found the Truth, He would come and let him and his people know it. And King Bimbisara and his people received Him with great gladness, now that He had become a Buddha. And in a grove of bamboo trees a little way outside the city He stayed many days, teaching and preaching so kindly and so persuasively, that the king and all his people accepted His teaching entirely and became His declared followers. And the king, to show the respect in which he held the Buddha and His Teaching and the Brotherhood of Bhikkhus, made Him a gift of the Bamboo Grove and of a fine Vihara he caused to be build there, so that He and His Sangha would always have a comfortable place to live in during the rainy season.

Now one morning as the Buddha left the Bamboo Grove to go into Rajagaha to beg alms of food, He saw a young man all dripping wet as if he had just come from bathing, standing in the roadway and bowing in each of the four directions, East, South, West and North, as well as to the sky overhead and to the ground beneath his feet, at the same time throwing rice in each of these directions.

The Buddha looked at the young man as he went through this strange performance on the public street, and then He stopped and asked the young man why he was acting like that. The young man replied that he was only doing what

his old father had asked him to do each morning so as to keep any evil from coming to him during each day from any of the four directions, or from the gods above, or from the demons below. It was his father's last wish, spoken on his death-bed, so he could not deny him his wish. And every day since his father had died, he had faithfully observed his promise without missing a single morning.

"It is very right of you," said the Buddha when He heard the young man's answer, "to keep the promise you made to your dying father and carry out his wish faithfully; but what you are doing is not really what your father meant."

"When your father told you that you were to bow down to, and make an offering of rice to the East, he meant that you were to show respect and honor to those through whom you have come into life, namely, to your parents. By worshiping the South, he meant worshiping and honoring your teachers through whom you get knowledge. By worshiping the West, he meant cherishing and supporting wife and children. By worshiping the North, he meant holding in esteem all relatives and friends, and helping them where they have need of help. By worshiping the sky, he meant worshiping and reverencing all that is good and holy and high. And by worshiping the earth, he meant respecting the rights of every creature, even the smallest and meanest that lives upon it. This is the way in which your father wished you to behave so that no harm would come to you any day from any quarter whatsoever."

And there and then the Lord Buddha went on to give Sigala — for that was the name of the young man He was speaking to — some good counsel as to how he should live so as to make his own and other people's lives happy and fortunate here and now, and in the future earn an equally happy and fortunate lot. He told Sigala to abstain from killing and stealing and lying and lewdness and the using of intoxicating drinks or hurtful drugs. He told him to avoid bad companions and cultivate the acquaintance of good people. He told him to work diligently so as to get wealth, and then to take care of the wealth he earned, but yet not to be greedy in keeping it all to himself, nor yet foolish in throwing it away again on foolish objects, but to use a fourth part of it in supporting himself and all depending on him, his wife and family, another fourth part in building up and extending his business further, another fourth part in helping any one in need of help, and the last fourth part he was to lay aside and keep in case misfortune should come to him and he should need help himself.

Young Sigala listened respectfully to all the good counsel the Lord Buddha thus gave him. Then he confessed that when his father was living, he had often told him about the Buddha and what a great and good teacher He was, and had tried to get him to go and see the Buddha and hear Him preach; but he always refused to go, saying that is was too much trouble and would only weary him, and that he had neither time nor money to spend on wandering ascetics like Gotama. And Sigala now asked the Buddha kindly to pardon him for his former neglect, and to accept him as a follower; for, so he promised the Lord Buddha, he meant to worship the six directions of space exactly in this right way which the Buddha had just taught him, for all the rest of his life.

The full account of all the Buddha said to Sigala that morning in the streets of Rajagaha, can be read in the Sigalovada Sutta of the Samyutta Nikaya.

X
Sariputta and Moggallana

Now about this time there was staying near Rajagaha a famous religious teacher called Sañjaya, along with a large following of disciples and pupils, numbering about two hundred in all. And among these two-hundred disciples of Sañjaya, there were two very close friends who were not at all satisfied with the teaching their master gave them. These two friends whose names were Upatissa and Kolita, wanted to know something more than their teacher knew and taught: they wanted to find that state which is beyond the power of death. They wanted to find what they called "The Deathless." And these two friends were so fond of one another, that they always shared together what ever either of them got. And they made a solemn promise to each other that they would both search and study and meditate with all their power, and try to find "The Deathless," and whichever of them found it first, he would let the other know.

Your coming and going, brother, are so serene and placid," he said, "your face is so clear and bright; very much would I like to know who is that teacher, to follow whom you have left home and friends behind. What is your teacher's name? What is the doctrine he preaches?"

Upatissa, however, knew that it was not proper to ask questions of a stranger ascetic while he was busy begging his morning meal, so he patiently walked on some way behind him as he passed in and out among the houses with his begging bowl; but at last, when the ascetic had gone round all the houses, and now was going out of the city gate, Upatissa went up to him, and greeting him with respect, humbly asked him if he would kindly tell him who was the teacher at whose feet he sat and learned. "Your coming and going, brother, are so serene and placid," he said, "your face is so clear and bright; very much would I like to know who is that teacher, to follow whom you have left home and friends behind. What is your teacher's name? What is the doctrine he preaches?"

"I can soon tell you that, brother," said the ascetic pleasantly. "There is a great ascetic of the Sakya race who has left his home and country behind in order to follow the homeless life. And it is to follow him that I have left the household life. It is that Blessed One who is my teacher. It is His teaching that I follow and practice."

"And what is that teaching, Venerable Sir? What is it that your master teaches? I also would like to know it," said Upatissa eagerly, thinking that perhaps at last now he was going to hear from this ascetic about that "Deathless" for which he and his friend Kolita had been looking for so long.

"I am only a novice, a newcomer into the Brotherhood of the Blessed One," replied the ascetic modestly. "It is only a little while ago since I began to study

under the Blessed One, and to follow His rules of discipline, so I do not know very much yet about His Teaching. I cannot explain it to you in every little point. But if it is only the pith of His teaching that you want; I can give you that just in a few words."

"That is all I want, brother," said Upatissa quickly. "Tell me the substance. The substance is just what I want. What need to make a lot of words about it?"

"Very well, then," said the ascetic. "Listen!"

"How all things here through Cause have come, He hath made known, the Awakened One. And how again they pass away, That, too, the Great Recluse doth say."

That was all the ascetic said. But as Upatissa stood there listening to him by the city gate in one great flash of insight there burst upon his mind in all its force and verity, the great truth taught by all the Buddhas — the truth that everything that ever has come into existence, or ever will come into existence, inevitably, unfailingly, without exception, must and will again Pass out of existence. Upatissa in this great moment saw clearly with his whole heart and mind that only whatever has not arisen, never had come into existence can be free from the law that it must pass out of existence again, must die. And he said to the ascetic: "If this is the doctrine you have learned from your teacher, then indeed you have found the state that is free from sorrow, free from death, the state of the Sorrowless, the Deathless, which has not been made known to men for ages and ages." Then, with expressions of joyful gratitude, he took leave of the ascetic who thus in a moment had brought light to his mind, and he went off to find his friend Kolita and bring him the great news that at last he had found "The Deathless."

But just as he had seen the unknown ascetic from a distance and wondered at his impressive walk and behavior; so now Kolita saw his friend Upatissa coming near, and wondered what had made such a change in his whole appearance. And he said to him:

"Why, brother, how clear and shining your face is! Can it be, brother, that at last you have found "The Deathless" we both have been seeking so long?"

"It is so, brother; it is so," was Upatissa's glad reply. "I have found the Deathless."

"But how, brother, how?" Kolita asked eagerly.

Then Upatissa told his bosom friend Kolita about the unknown ascetic he had seen that morning begging in the streets — an ascetic all dressed in yellow, and looking so calm and collected as he never had seen an ascetic look before. And how he had followed him out of the city gate and then asked him to tell him the secret of his peace and serenity. Then he repeated to Kolita the four line stanza the ascetic of the happy countenance had repeated to him. And there and then, in a flash of perception, Kolita also saw the Truth that the Deathless is that which never has arisen in this world of sights and sounds and scents and tastes and touches and ideas, and, because it never has so arisen, therefore cannot pass away again, cannot die.

So these two friends, with minds now happy and joyful, went to the place where the Buddha was, and asked to be allowed to take Him as their master and teacher henceforth instead of Anaya whom they now left. And the Buddha

accepted them into the Brotherhood of His Bhikkhus, and within a very short time they became the very foremost of the Buddha's disciples for their learning and practical knowledge. In fact, these two friends Upatissa and Kolita, became the two great Theras known to the world as Sariputta and Moggallana. And the name of the ascetic who told them the Doctrine of the Buddha in one little stanza or gatha of four lines only, was Assaji. And ever afterwards this little stanza was known as "Assaji's stanza."

But it was not only Upatissa and Kolita who joined the Buddha's Order of Bhikkhus while he was staying at Rajagaha at this time. Many of the youths of the best families of Magadha left their homes, their fathers and mothers and all their relations behind them, and became the Bhikkhu disciples of the great Sakya teacher who was so different from the ordinary religious teachers of the country — so great and noble by birth and attainments, and whose Teaching, if followed to its end, brought about the ceasing of all things evil. Indeed, so many young men left their homes to follow the Sakya Sage, the Buddha Gotama, that the people of the country began to get alarmed and annoyed, and some of them even got angry. And they went to the Buddha and complained saying that if things went on much longer as they were doing, soon there would be no young men at all left in the country to live the household life. Soon, they said, there would be no more families, no more wives and children, and the whole country would go to ruin and become an empty wilderness, for all the young men in the country would be Bhikkhus.

So when the Buddha heard this complaint of the people, He gave orders that after this, no one was to come and follow Him as a Bhikkhu without first getting permission to do so from his father or mother; or, if his father and mother were dead, then from his nearest relation, whoever that might be. And when the people of Magadha heard of this new rule of the Buddha, they were once more pleased and contented to have a Buddha in their midst, and they gave Him and His Bhikkhus the best of everything they had got. And this new rule which the Buddha thus first gave out at Rajagaha with regard to Bhikkhus joining the Order, is the one we find in the Vinaya Rules of the Sangha to this day.

XI
Kapilavatthu

WHEN the Buddha's father, King Suddhodana, heard that his son was now at Rajagaha, he sent a messenger to tell Him that His father was now getting old, and begged that He would come and let him see his son once more before he died. But the messenger he sent happened to arrive at Rajagaha just when the Buddha was preaching to the people. So he sat down and listened to the preaching till it was finished before trying to deliver his message. But what the Buddha said seemed to him so good and so true as he listened to it, that when the discourse was ended, in his pleasure and delight with it, he had forgotten all about what he had come for, he had forgotten the message King Suddhodana had sent him to take to his son the Buddha, and instead of delivering it, he remained with the Buddha so as to hear Him preach some more.

King Suddhodana at Kapilavatthu, meanwhile waited a long time for his messenger to come back and tell him what his son had said in reply to his message, but no messenger came. Then he sent another messenger to take the same message to his son the Buddha, and to see what had happened to his first messenger. But this second messenger also, when he arrived, found the Buddha preaching, listened to His preaching, became converted to His doctrine, and remained with Him. Then King Suddhodana sent out a third messenger with his message and to see what had happened to the first two he had sent; but the same thing happened to him as to the other two before him; he did not come back with any answer. And so, one after another, King Suddhodana sent out other messengers until he had sent out nine altogether; but none of them came back. They were also charmed by the Buddha's words that they forgot what they had been sent to say, and stayed with the Buddha so as to hear more of His preaching.

The King thought it was very strange that none of his messengers had come back with any answer. He asked Yasodhara, his son's wife, to try do what she could to get an answer from Him, and to bring Him to Kapilavatthu. So now Yasodhara sent a messenger asking her husband to come and see her and Rahula, who was a fine little boy seven years old. But the same thing happened to her messenger as happened to King Suddhodana's: he was so pleased with the Buddha's preaching that he forgot the message he had been sent with, and did not return. Then another and another messenger was sent by Yasodhara but none of them returned. All were captivated by the Buddha's words, and remained with Him.

And now Yasodhara did not know what more she could do to get her husband to come and see her and His son. Then King Suddhodana remembered that there was a young man about the court called Udayi who had formerly been the

Buddha's favorite playmate when they both were boys together. And he thought that if he sent Udayi to tell his son that His old father wanted to see Him once more before he died, perhaps He would listen to this old friend of His boyhood's days, and come to Kapilavatthu. For of course, neither the King nor Yasodhara knew that all the messengers they had sent before had never delivered their message at all.

So now the friend of His youth, Udayi, was sent to ask the Buddha to come to Kapilavatthu and let everyone there see His face once more — His father, His wife, His son, and all the people of the country who would have called Him their king one day if He had not gone away to become a religious teacher. And when Udayi came to Rajagaha he soon learned the real reason why King Suddhodana's and Princess Yasodhara's messengers had never come back. So Udayi stopped his ears while the preaching was going on for fear that he too might do as the others had done. But when the preaching was over, he went to the Buddha and after greeting Him with profound reverence, he told Him that His father and wife and son, as well as all the people of Kapilavatthu, were very, very anxious to see the Buddha that had appeared in the world, and asked Him out of compassion to come and visit them soon. Then the Buddha very kindly said that He would not refuse to gratify the wish of those who were His own people, and that very soon He would go to Kapilavatthu and see them all. So Udayi hurried back to King Suddhodana bearing the news that He who before was Prince Siddhattha, and now was the great, the universally honored Buddha, soon would be coming to the city to do the duty of a son to his father.

Then every one in Kapilavatthu, from the King downward, was filled with joy to know that their prince who had left them seven long years ago and become a homeless beggar in order to follow the religious life, had succeeded in His efforts to find the Truth, and was now a Buddha, a teacher not only of men but of the very gods, and soon would be back among His own folk again to tell them what he had found.

So they swept up all the streets of the city and made them clean as they never had been made clean before. They decorated all their houses with flowers, and hung flags and streamers of many colored cloth along the streets, and prepared to give their prince a reception worthy of the eldest son of their Raja, and a great Buddha as well.

And on the day when the Buddha was expected to arrive in the city, the king sent out his best elephants decorated with all their royal ornaments, along the road by which he thought his son would come, in order that they might meet Him and conduct Him in regal state into the city of His fathers. Yasodhara also, on this great day, ordered her bearers to carry her litter out to the borders of the city so that she might meet her husband at the city gate. But as they were carrying her along the main street, she saw ahead of her an ascetic dressed all in yellow who was going round from door to door with a bowl in his hand begging alms of fool. "Who can that ascetic be?" she thought to herself. "Never before have I seen a begging ascetic look so noble an dignified as this one does. He must be a very good and holy man." But as she came nearer, what was her surprise to find that the yellow-robed beggar was her own husband, the father of her child, the

handsome Prince Siddhattha of former days! He was not handsome now in the way that he used to be handsome. About Him now there was something that was better than handsomeness, something great and high and holy that made her get down out of her litter and bow low before His feet, as He passed upon His silent way, His eyes fixed on the ground, not seeing her.

But when she returned to the Palace and told the king her father-in-law in what way his son and her husband, had come into the city, as a beggar, King Suddhodana was filled with humiliation and anger at the news. At once he ordered his charioteer to get the chariot ready and he drove furiously through the streets of the city towards the place where Yasodhara had told him she had seen her husband begging. When the king got there he found the Buddha calmly pacing along towards the Palace with a worshiping crowd all round Him. But the king's indignation and anger at his son's behavior in begging where He had the right to take all He wanted without asking leave, remained as great as ever, and he at once began to scold and upbraid Him.

"What is this I hear about you, my son?" he cried. "Was it for this that you left your father's home, to come back begging your daily food like the commonest beggar in the kingdom — you, the son of the king, the heir to the throne? O my son, you have this day disgraced me and the royal house to which you belong. When did any of your race and lineage do a thing like this? When did any of our family before beg his food like a common beggar?"

But the Buddha quietly answered his grieved, indignant father: "Indeed, my father, this is how my race and lineage have always done."

"Your race have always been kings for as long as men can remember," said King Suddhodana proudly. "Not one of them ever did a thing like this."

"That is true, my father," the Buddha gently answered. "But now I do not think of my earthly descent. Now I belong to the race of the Buddha of all time. It is of them that I speak when I say that I only do as my race has always done. For the Buddhas have always done like this, and now, as is only right and proper, I do the same."

And as the Buddha walked along beside his father towards the Palace, He told him that He was not coming back to the home of His fathers, by any means poor or empty handed. He told him that He was bringing back with Him a precious jewel, the richest, most precious jewel in the world, the jewel of the security of Nibbana. And then He went on to tell His father all about that great security, Nibbana, and about the way in which it can be reached. And when He had come to the Palace, He sat down and explained the Truth He had discovered so simply and persuasively that not only His father and Yasodhara and His son Rahula, but all the people of Kapilavatthu became his followers and accepted His Teaching as true. And after a short time, His son Rahula was ordained and became a member of the Order of Bhikkhus.

XII
Daily Life

THE Buddha now began that career of continual teaching and preaching which lasted for forty-four years, during which time He wandered about principally in that part of Northern India where are now Oudh, Bihar, and the North Bengal. Except during the rainy season He very seldom stayed more than a day or two at any one place. And during the rainy season of each year, He generally lived at the Bamboo Grove or Veluvana Vihara at Rajagaha that had been given Him by King Bimbisara, or else at the Jetavana Vihara near Savatthi in the Kosala country, which had been presented to Him by a very generous supporter of the Buddha and His Sangha whose name was Anathapindika.

During these years the daily habits of the Buddha were somewhat as follows:

He rose early in the morning before dawn, and after making His toilet, sat down and engaged in meditation for some time. Then, when daylight was fully come, He used to put His robe on decently over both shoulders, and taking His almsbowl in hand, go out to the village or town near which He happened to be staying at the time, and with His eyes fixed on the ground, pass from door to door, waiting for, and accepting in silence, whatever the charitable might put into His bowl. Sometimes He went out on this round for alms alone by Himself; sometimes he went accompanied by a body of His disciples who passed along in single file behind Him, their bowls in their hands also, and with the same modest and subdued demeanor. Occasionally, when begging alone, some supporter to whose door He came, would invite Him to come in and eat His meal in their house. Such invitations He usually accepted, taking the seat that had been prepared for Him, and partaking of what was put in His bowl by the people of the house who meantime had taken it from Him and filled it with the best of everything they had. Then, after finishing His meal and washing His hands, He would speak to those present about His doctrine, telling them about the benefit and advantage of doing good and the disadvantage and harm of doing evil both now and in the future, and then He would rise and go back to the place where He happened to be staying at the time. There He would sit quiet waiting in a rest-house or under a tree near by, until all the Bhikkhus living with Him at the time, had finished their meal also; and then He would retire to His own chamber where He would wash His feet, coming out again afterwards to give an address to the Bhikkhus who meanwhile had assembled together in order to listen to Him, and to exhort them to be diligent in learning the Doctrine and practicing the Discipline, so as to attain to a realization of Nibbana here and now in this present life.

After He had finished speaking, some of the Bhikkhus would ask Him to give them a subject to meditate upon suitable to their individual character and the state

of progress at which they had arrived, and then the Buddha would tell them what would be best for them to meditate on that day, giving them an easy or a difficult subject according as they were beginners or far advanced in their study and practice. Then the Bhikkhus would break up their gathering, and each would go away by himself under a tree or to some retired spot in the fields, and spend the afternoon there meditating upon the subject the Master had given each for meditation.

The Buddha would now go back to His private room, and if it was the hot season, and by reason of the great heat He felt inclined to lie down for a little and rest, He would do so with His mind composed and collected. Then, being refreshed, He would rise from His couch which simply consisted of His robe folded in four and laid on the floor of His room, and He would begin to consider the people in the world and how best He could help them to gain final deliverance from everything evil. By this time the people from the village or town near which he was living, perhaps would come to Him with offerings of one kind or another, wishing at the same time to hear Him preach. So He would sit down and after accepting their gifts, speak to them in such a nice easy way, in a way so suited to the understanding of each person present, whether rich or poor, learned or unlearned, that each of them would think that the Great Teacher was speaking specially to them, to nobody else, and when He had ended speaking, they would all go away pleased and delighted with everything they had heard.

When these visitors had thus gone, the Buddha would then go and bathe in the Vihara somewhere or, if there was a good bathing-tank or pond near by, go and bathe there, and afterwards retire again to His private room, and sitting down alone, engage in meditation.

By this time it would be coming on towards evening; and now any Bhikkhus who did not belong to the company who were living with Him but were living somewhere else, were free to come and see Him and get advice from him about their practice of meditation or ask Him to explain to them some points about the Doctrine which they did not fully understand. Such Bhikkhus were now received by Him and He gave them the counsel and advice they required, and cleared up for them their difficulties in understanding with kind and helpful answers which sent them away cheered and encouraged and strengthened. And this the Buddha always did in the kindest and most patient and courteous manner. During all the forty-four years of His life when He thus received Bhikkhus from other places nearly every day, and answered their questions and solved their difficulties for them, never once was He known to lose patience with any questioner or become annoyed or angry at anything any one said, whether they were friendly or hostile; still less did He ever become confused and confounded, or unable to answer any question asked Him. He was always prepared to speak with all who came to Him, whether honestly ask His help, or only to try to trap Him in what He said. To those who really wanted help in their difficulties, He gave helpful, satisfying answers. And those who came to try to confuse and puzzle Him, and trip Him up in His words very often came away full of admiration for His ready knowledge and wisdom, some of them even becoming there and then His devoted followers for the rest of their life.

The evening and the earlier part of the night is this was given to visitors. But now, being a little weary of so much sitting all day, the Buddha used to get to His feet and spend some time just pacing up and down to relieve and refresh His limbs. Then, after walking back and forward like this for a while, He would retire to His room and go to rest for the night.

Thus during the forty-four years of His career of teaching and preaching His doctrine, did the Buddha spend each day when not actually engaged in traveling from one place to another, always ready to help and instruct any one who desired His help and instructions in religious matters. But it was not only in religious but also in every day worldly affairs that He was sometimes able to do good with His practical wisdom to the people among whom He freely moved during these forty-four years of active, beneficent life.

Thus, once when He was staying at the Jetavana Vihara at Savatthi, the people of Kapila and Koliya fell into a great and bitter dispute about the watering of their paddy fields. It was a time of drought. No rain had fallen for a long time, and as a result, the stream that ran between the fields of the Kapila folk on one side, and the fields of the Koliya people on the other, was almost dried up. There was only a very little water left in it. And each of these two peoples, the Kapilas and the Koliyas, wanted to get all the water there was for their own fields, and to leave the others none. And they began to get ready to fight about it, each party prepared to kill the people on the other side of the stream so as to get all the water in it for themselves.

Now the Kapila people were the Buddha's own people, and when He heard about this quarrel of theirs with the Koliyas, He felt very sorry to think that they were going to kill other people and perhaps get killed themselves all for the sake of a little water. So He set out for the place where the angry people were gathered together all ready to fight, with their weapons in their hands. And when He got there He spoke to them like this:

"Princes and warriors, listen to what I am going to say, and answer what I ask you, truthfully. What is it you are getting ready to kill one another about?"

"About the water in the stream, here, which we both want for our dry fields," said the people of both banks of the stream.

"Yes," said the Buddha, "but tell me truly. Which do you think is the more valuable — the little water in this stream, or the blood in the veins of the many men, especially that in the veins of princes and kings?"

"The blood of men, and especially the blood of princes and kings," the people at once replied, "of course is much more valuable than the water of the stream."

"That being so," the Buddha now said, "is it fit and proper to risk what is more precious and valuable for the sake of what is less precious and valuable?"

"Nay, indeed, Lord," the people replied, "it would not be fit and proper to risk what is more valuable for the sake of what is less valuable."

"If that is so," concluded the Buddha, "go and conquer your anger, put away your murderous weapons, and come to a peaceable agreement among yourselves."

And both the Kapila and the Koliya people, now heartily ashamed of their foolishness and lack of good sense thus pointed out to them by the Lord Buddha,

did as He told them, and agreed to share equally between them what water was in the stream, and ever afterwards lived at peace with one another.

XIII
Mahapajapati

MEANWHILE the Buddha's father King Suddhodana fell very ill, so like a good son, the Buddha, taking with Him His half-brother Nanda who now was one of His Bhikkhus, and Ananda and Sariputta and Moggallana, went to visit and console His father in his illness. At first, in his pleasure at seeing his beloved son again, King Suddhodana grew a little better, and everyone thought that he was going to get well altogether; but the improvement lasted only a little while. He was getting too old now to have much strength for resisting sickness, and a few days later, the king became very ill again, and to the grief of the whole kingdom, passed away in death.

Her husband now being dead, Queen Mahapajapati the Buddha's own mother's sister, who had brought Him up the same as if He had been her own child, did not want to stay living in household life any longer. Mourning for her husband who had just died, she wished henceforth to live a religious life just like a Bhikkhu, under the guidance and instruction of her foster-son, the Buddha. So, along with a number of her ladies who did not want to part from their mistress but wished to go with her wherever she might go, she went to the Buddha and asked Him if out of pity and compassion He would not allow women also to leave the household life the same as men, and live under His guidance and instruction the same as the Bhikkhus. But although she entreated the Buddha three separate times to accept her and her ladies as female Bhikkhus under Him, He begged her not to ask such a thing from him. And Queen Mahapajapati was very much grieved that her great wish should thus have been refused, and bursting into tears, she and her ladies left the Buddha's presence weeping.

And now, having waited at Kapilavatthu until the funeral ceremonies for his father were over, the Buddha left the city, and wandering on from place to place, at length came to Vesali, and took up His residence in the Vihara in the Great Wood there.

Then Mahapajapati cut off her hair and putting on yellow robes, along with a lot of her ladies, she took the road to Vesali, proceeding on foot from village to village until in due time she arrived at the Vihara in the Great Wood where the Buddha was staying.

Then, with her feet all swollen with her long walk, and with the dust of the road still upon her, sad and dejected, she stood weeping outside the Vihara. And Ananda saw her standing there in such a pitiful condition, and asked her what was the matter, why she was crying. And she answered: "It is because, O Ananda, the Blessed One will not allow women to retire from the household life and live the homeless life under His Doctrine and Discipline."

"If that is so, O daughter of the Gotama family," said Ananda, "wait a moment and I will plead with the Blessed One that He may be pleased to allow women to live under His Doctrine and Discipline the same as the Bhikkhus do."

And Ananda did as he promised Mahapajapati, and going into the room where the Buddha was, he humbly and respectfully asked the Buddha to have compassion on women and allow them to follow the homeless life under His guidance the same as men.

"Enough, Ananda, enough! Do not ask me any such thing!" was the Buddha's reply to him.

But Ananda was not in the least daunted or discouraged. A second time and a third time he asked the Buddha the very same thing, and each time he received the very same answer.

Then Ananda thought to himself: "The Blessed One will not give permission for women to withdraw from household life under Him when He is asked direct; but perhaps He may give permission if He is approached in another way."

So he said to his Master:

"If women were to be allowed, Reverend Lord, to retire from the household life and follow the life of homelessness under the Doctrine and Discipline of the Tathagata, would they be able to reach the four stages, one after another, of the Path of Holiness that leads to the Deathless, to Nibbana?"

"Yes, Ananda," was the Buddha's reply, "if women were to withdraw from household life and follow my Doctrine and Discipline, they could reach Nibbana in this life, they could become Arahants."

"If that is so," said Ananda, "consider, Reverend Lord, what a great benefactress Mahapajapati of the Gotama family, has been. She is the sister of the mother of the Blessed One; and as foster-mother as nurse, as giver of mother's milk, she reared and nurtured the Blessed One when His own mother died. Pray, Reverend Lord, allow women to withdraw from household life and live the homeless life under the Doctrine and Discipline made known to the world by the Tathagata."

"Well, Ananda," said the Buddha, "if Mahapajapati of the Gotama family is willing to accept and keep strictly these eight rules, let this be considered as her ordination."

And then the Buddha went on to tell Ananda that every women who wished to follow His Discipline must show respect to any Bhikkhu no matter how lately he may have been in the Order or how long she may have been in the Order, and she must not live in any district where there are no Bhikkhus, must listen to an admonition from an appointed Bhikkhu every Sabbath day, must invite criticism of her behavior both from Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis at the end of each Vassa, if guilty of a serious offense must do penance towards both Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis, must spend a period of testing as a novice for two years before being fully ordained by a chapter composed of both Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis, must not speak evil in any way about any Bhikkhu, and must not officially administer admonition to a Bhikkhu but must accept such admonition from a Bhikkhu.

"If Ananda," said the Buddha in conclusion, "Mahapajapati is willing to obey these eight rules and to keep them as long as she lives, then she may consider herself ordained as a female Bhikkhu or Bhikkhuni."

Then Ananda took leave of the Buddha and went and told Mahapajapati all that the Buddha had said. And Mahapajapati, glad and happy, answered Ananda:

"O Ananda, Reverend Sir, just as a young woman or young man, fond of personal adornment, having bathed their head and got a wreath of beautiful, sweet-smelling flowers, would lift it up with both hands and place it on their head, on that, the noblest part of the body, even so do I, O Ananda, Reverend Sir, take up these eight rules, never to break them as long as my life shall last."

Then Ananda went back to where the Buddha was, and greeting his Master respectfully, he spoke to Him and said: "Mahapajapati of the Gotama family, Reverend Lord, accepts the eight strict rules laid upon her by the Blessed One. The sister of the mother of the Blessed One is now ordained a Bhikkhuni."

But the Buddha said:

"Ananda, not for long will this Doctrine and Discipline of mine endure among women who withdraw from the household life. Only for five hundred years will it so endure, Ananda, just as families in which there are many women and few men, do not long hold out against thieves and robbers, so where women take to the homeless life under a Doctrine and Discipline like mine, it does not long endure. It will be with it as with a field of rice or sugar-cane when mildew falls on it: it will not flourish very long."

And things happened exactly as the Buddha had foreseen. The proper ordination of women Bhikkhus or, as they are correctly called, Bhikkhunis, died out about five hundred years after Mahapajapati thus became the first Bhikkhuni in the world, there being no longer any Bhikkhunis then living who had been ten years in the Order and so able to confer ordination properly.

XIV
Wonder-working

As THE Buddha went wandering here and there about the country along with His Bhikkhus, everywhere He went the people came in crowds to see Him and to hear Him teach and preach, and many were converted to belief in Him and in His Doctrine. But there were also going about the country in the same way that He did, other religious teachers; and some of these, by doing very wonderful and extraordinary things, sometimes attracted many people to go and see them do such things. And then these people stayed and listened to their preaching, and sometimes believed in what they preached and became their followers. Now when the Buddha's Bhikkhus saw what was happening in this way, they went to their Master and asked Him if He, too, would not do some wonderful and extraordinary thing just to show the simple jungle people that He was not inferior to these other religious teachers they were admiring because of the wonderful things they could do, and so induce them to follow Him instead of the other religious teachers.

But the Buddha answered the Bhikkhus who asked Him this, that He would be ashamed to attract people to listen to Him and believe in Him just because, He could do something extraordinary that would make them gape with astonishment, something of the nature of what they would call a miracle. "The only miracle," said the Buddha, "which the Tathagatas perform is this — that when they find a man full of passion and craving, they leave him free from passion and craving. When they find a man a slave to anger and hatred, they leave him delivered from anger and hatred. When they find a man blinded with delusion and ignorance, they open his eyes and leave him rid of delusion and ignorance. This is the only miracle They perform. Any other miracle They loathe and despise and shun."

But now some one came and told the Buddha that Moggallana, by the use of extraordinary power which he possessed more than any other of the Arahants, had gone up to a high place difficult to get at, and from it had brought down a very fine, specially good bowl which a certain man had put on that high place in order to test Moggallana's power and see if he would be able to go there and get it. But the Buddha was very much displeased to hear about this that Moggallana had been doing; and He sent for Moggallana and told him to bring with him the bowl he had got in this way by the exercise of his abnormal powers. And when Moggallana came with the bowl, the Buddha took it from his hand and broke it into pieces before Moggallana and all the assembled Bhikkhus, and strictly charged him that he must never on any account do such a thing again as show off his powers, and that none of His Bhikkhus must ever do any kind of wonderful thing just to make simple ignorant people admire at them: or if they did, then they

must at once leave His Brotherhood of Bhikkhus; they could not be allowed to remain with Him as His followers. And this particular command of the Buddha about wonderworking remains to this day as one of the Vinaya rules for the breaking of which a Bhikkhu is at once put out of the Order and cannot be taken back into it. For a Bhikkhu to perform, or even claim to be able to perform, any supernormal feat, is a Parajika or Great Offense, as seriously looked upon as murder or theft or unchastity; and if he does such a thing he must leave the Order at once.

Thus, the Buddha never tried to astonish the people by doing any wonderful deeds and after this affair with Moggallana, neither he nor any other of the Bhikkhus ever tried to do any. Yet in spite of this, the people clearly saw and felt that the Buddha was a great teacher, and they showed their respect and veneration for Him wherever He went, by providing plentifully for the wants of Himself and His company of Bhikkhus who went about everywhere with Him. And many of the followers of the other religious teachers did not like to see this at all. They were very much annoyed to see how the people went to these new yellow-robed ascetics of the Sakya ascetic Gotama to hear them preach and to give them the best of fool and medicines, while they neglected them and their teachers.

Thus, once when the Buddha and His Bhikkhus came to the town of Kosambi where there lives a well-known religious teacher along with a large company of disciples, these latter began to abuse and revile the Bhikkhus and followers of the Buddha in the most outrageous manner, calling them all sorts of abusive and wicked names.

Then Ananda came to the Buddha and told his Master what these other ascetics were saying about the Buddha's Bhikkhus, and how they used the most shameful language about them, and heaped the coarsest abuse upon them whenever they met them anywhere, but especially when they met them going out with their begging-bowls to collect alms of food. And on behalf of all the Bhikkhus who had asked him to speak to the Buddha about the matter, he asked the Buddha if He did not think it would be better for Him and them to leave Kosambi and go some-where else where they would not have to listen to such abuse every day when they went out begging.

The Buddha quietly listened to all Ananda had to say. Then He spoke and said:

"But suppose, Ananda, that we are ill-treated and abused in the next place we go, what shall we do then?"

"Then we shall go to some other place," said Ananda.

"And if we are reviled and miscalled in that new place too, what shall we do then?"

"Then we shall go to some other place," replied Ananda.

The Buddha sat silent for a little while; then, with a gently glance at Ananda, He said:

"O Ananda, a little patience properly exercised now, will save us all the trouble of so much moving about. We cannot say for certain that we shall find the peace we want in any new place we may go to; but we are sure to find it just where we are, if only we practice patience. By patience and forbearance those that

are wise overcome all their enemies. Look at the elephant, that men use in war, Ananda. He plunges into the thick of the fighting and pays no attention to the darts and arrows and javelins that are hurled at him from all sides, but rushes on, sweeping away everything from before him. And I, Ananda, am going to imitate that elephant. I shall stay here in this town and preach my excellent doctrine with all my force and power, and labor without ceasing to deliver wretched men from the net of passion in which they are entangled and caught fast. I shall not pay the least attention to the abuse these other ascetics hurl at me and my disciples. Like men, who spit up at the sky thinking they are going to dirty it only to find that their spit does not touch the sky at all or dirty it, but only falls back on and dirties themselves, so these poor men who spit abuse at us will only find their abuse come back on themselves, if we pay no attention to it."

So, notwithstanding the request and wishes of Ananda and all the other Bhikkhus, the Buddha still stayed on at Kosambi; and the good result of His practice of patience and forbearance was soon seen. For when the people of Kosambi saw how meekly He and His Bhikkhus endured the bad language of the other ascetics without ever answering them back in the same way they became displeased with the other ascetics for abusing men who never abused them. And many of the young men of Kosambi admired the behavior of the Buddha and His Bhikkhus in this respect so much, that they became His followers and joined the Order of Bhikkhus.

Unfortunately, however, these Kosambi youths did not, in becoming Bhikkhus, at once get rid of their quarrelsome dispositions, and very soon they were involved in a bitter dispute among themselves about some small point in what they considered correct Bhikkhu behavior. Some maintained one thing and some maintained another, and although the Buddha repeatedly admonished them to live at peace with one another and not quarrel, they still kept on wrangling. They paid no attention to the Buddha when He told them that quarreling and ill-will were greater evils than the little fault in behavior about which all their disputing arose. So when the Buddha saw that they were not going to listen to Him or take His advice, He went away from Kosambi by Himself, leaving all the Bhikkhus there behind Him. Then the people of Kosambi, when they saw that the Great Teacher had gone away by Himself, and that the Bhikkhus He had left behind were behaving just like common worldly people who had not left the household life t become ascetics, quarreling and wrangling no different from householders they stopped putting any food in the bowls of the quarrelsome Bhikkhus when they came round begging in the mornings. This step very quickly brought the squabbling Bhikkhus to their senses. They made up their quarrel; came to peace again with one another; and the Buddha once more allowed them to join Him, and go with Him wherever He went.

XV
Discourses

AS THE son of a king, and so, accustomed to the manners of a royal court, the Buddha was perfectly at home, entirely at his ease, in the company of the greatest kings and warriors and priests, and could hold His own in conversation with any of them, even the most learned, and send them away pleased and delighted with what they had heard from Him. But He was equally as well able to speak in a manner common people could understand, and as He wandered about the country on foot, was always ready to talk to any one He happened to meet — farmers, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, barbers, anybody who liked to speak to Him.

Thus, one day as he was traveling through a district covered with paddy fields, He fell in with a farmer at work in his field, and stopped and began talking to him about his cattle, and plowing, and seed, and about how he expected his crop to turn out this year. "You know," He said to the farmer, "I am a farmer, too, and I have got all the things needed for working my fields, and the seed as well."

"You a farmer!" said the surprised cultivator. "Where then have you left your bullocks, your plow, and the other things you need?"

"I have got them all with me here," said the Buddha calmly. "Listen to me, and I'll tell you all about it."

"My seed is the warm desire and feeling of compassion which caused me to resolve to become a Buddha, as also the knowledge which I obtained under the Bodhi Tree. The rain that watered my seed and made it grow richly and abundantly, was the constant good deeds I did until I became a Buddha. My knowledge is the yoke, and wisdom the shaft of my plow. My heart is the reins with which I guide my bullocks. My plowshares is the diligence with which I get rid of all evil things in me. The handle of my plow is the Doctrine which enables me to remove all that is bad and promote all that is good. When you go plowing, you cut up and overthrow all bad weeds; so he who has learned the Four Noble Truths cuts up and overthrows all evil inclinations within him. At night, when your day's work is done, you unyoke your bullocks and let them go wherever they like. In the same way the wise men, in cleaving to what is perfect, lets go whatever is not perfect. Your bullocks have to strain and toil in order to do their work of plowing your fields; and in the same way the wise man has to strive with all his strength, and turn over the soil of his own nature, so as to reach Nibbana. The cultivator works hard in order to prepare his field for the seed; and in the same way the wise man has to work hard to get rid of the ills of existence. But the man who works in the paddy fields is often disappointed in the size of the crops he gets as the outcome of his toil and sometimes he has to go hungry. But

whoever works in the fields of wisdom, never is disappointed; he is sure to reap the full results of his labors; he is entirely happy, perfectly satisfied when he comes in sight of Nibbana. In this way it is, O farmer, that I am a farmer also. And this, too, is the way in which I do my work."

And the cultivator to whom the Buddha spoke this little sermon was so well pleased with it that he asked the Buddha there and then to accept him as a cultivator in the field of His Good Doctrine, and he became a follower of the Buddha for the rest of his life.

To another person who came to the Buddha and asked to be told the way in which common people might reach the best and happiest state, the state of Nibbana, the Buddha gave these simple instructions.

"Avoid the company of the foolish; cultivate the companionship of the wise. Show respect to those who are worthy of respect. Remain in a position that is in accordance with your abilities. Always perform meritorious deeds. Constantly aim at perfect behavior. Take pleasure in hearing and seeing all you can so as to acquire knowledge. Study everything that is not evil. Acquire a knowledge of what ought to be shunned. Speak only what is true, kindly and profitable. Be kind to, and support father and mother. Care for, and cherish wife and children. Resist temptation to do evil. Give alms. Observe the rules of right conduct. Assist relatives and friends when they are in need of assistance. Do nothing that is not permitted by the law of good. Abstain from intoxicating drinks or drugs. Do not be slow in doing good deeds when an opportunity to do them arises. Be courteous to all men. Be humble. Be easily satisfied. Acknowledge kindness received with gratitude. Listen to the preaching of the Doctrine in proper season. Be patient and forbearing. Take pleasure in profitable conversation. From time to time visit those who lead the holy life. Converse with them on religious subjects. Practice virtuous behavior. Bear in mind the Four Noble Truths. Keep ever before the mind's eye the goal of Nibbana. In the midst of every affliction, be unshaken, unperturbed, fearless, and composed. Who observes these perfect rules shall never be overcome by evil; he will always enjoy perfect peace of mind."

On another day when the Buddha was resting in a little village, the people of the place came to him and said:

"Reverend Sir, we know that you are a great religious teacher, and have taught much that is good to those disciples of your who follow you about and live the homeless life just as you do yourself. But we are not ascetics. We are just common folk who love our wives and children, and earn our living cultivating our fields and breeding cattle, and we take whatever innocent enjoyment comes our way. We use gold and silver. We like to ornament ourselves on holidays and feast days with jewelry and flowers. We use oils and perfumes to make our bodies pleasant to us. We follow the ordinary ways of the world. Now, Reverend Sir, if there is anything in your teaching that would be good for us to know, anything that would help us to be happy here and now as well as in the future, be pleased, Reverend Sir, to let us hear that part of your teaching, so that we may follow it and get the benefit of it."

“Well, villagers,” said the Buddha, “there are four things which a teacher like myself has to teach which are good for you and everybody who is not an ascetic to know and observe. Listen, and I will tell you about them.

“First: Whatever may be the employment by which you earn your living, in that business you ought always to do your best to make yourselves efficient. If you are a farmer you should try to be a good farmer, and make your fields grow all they can. If you are a merchant you should try to be a wide-awake and enterprising merchant. If you are a servant you should try to be a reliable and trustworthy servant. Be active and energetic always so as to get the best and fullest results from what you do, whatever it may be. In this way you will acquire wealth and be able to do good with it — to help any one who may need help. For it you do not acquire wealth by working for it, you will not be able to do good deeds and help others, for you will have nothing with which to help them.

“Second: You ought to take proper care of your wealth after you have got it, and not waste it in foolish ways. It is of no use to put water in a jar out of which it is allowed to run away again through a hold in the jar. It is good to get wealth, but it is every bit as necessary to see to it that when it is got it is not lost again in all sorts of foolish and wasteful ways.

“Third: People in worldly life should choose only good people for their friends and associates. People mostly become like the kind of people they mix with. If a man goes with good men, he has a good chance of becoming a good man himself. And if he goes with bad men, he is very likely to become bad too. You cannot touch black things without getting your fingers made black. So household folk should frequent the company of others who are good and wise and liberal and full of faith in what is good, and then they also will be likely to become good and wise and liberal and full of faith in what is good.

“Fourth: The householder should follow a regular and moderate way of living. He should not be extreme or extravagant in his way of life. He should not spend or give more than what he gets as income. If he does his wealth will be like a pond that has more streams running out of it than it has running into it. Such a pond very soon will run dry, and have no water in it at all. And very soon a man who pays out more then comes in to him, will have no more wealth. But if a man takes care to spend on himself and his family, or give away in charity, always a little less than his income, then the pond of his wealth will never run dry. There will always be some water, that is some wealth in it, for use when any sudden need for it arises. But this does not mean that he is not to make full use of his wealth. It does not mean that he is to heap it up and hide it away and not use it. A man who does that is like one who has a tree full of fruit in his garden, but instead of eating the fruit when it becomes ripe, puts it all away in a box to keep it there. Such a man will find that all his fruit will go rotten and he will get no good of it at all.

“These, then, O householders,” said the Buddha in concluding this sermon, “are the four things that will promote your success and well-being in this world if you observe them. And now I will tell you what are the four things which will promote your best good in the future. They are, first: Faith in the teaching that the doing of good will bring good results, and the doing of evil, evil results. Second:

The constant practice of good deeds, and the avoiding of evil deeds such as killing, stealing, lying, lewdness, and drinking intoxicating drinks. Third: The practice of liberality in giving so as to learn not to cling too closely to the things of the world. Fourth: The acquiring of wisdom so as to know and follow the path that leads to Nibbana."

Such was the sermon which the Lord Buddha delivered to these country villagers who wanted to know what ordinary household folk, not Bhikkhus or ascetics, could do to make sure of their well-being both here and hereafter. And they were all very much pleased with the plain practical advice which the Buddha gave them.

One of the longest discourses ever delivered was spoken, not to common folk nor yet to His Bhikkhus, but to no less a person than a king, King Ajatasattu of Magadha.

This King Ajatasattu was not a good man; he was, indeed, a murderer. He caused his own father, King Bimbisara who had been one of the first friends of the Buddha when he became Buddha, to be starved to death, and in this cruel and unrighteous manner, came to the throne himself.

It happened that one night of the full moon, King Ajatasattu sitting on the terrace of his palace, did not know what to do for entertainment, and decided that he would go and visit the Buddha who was then staying in a garden not too far away that had been given to Him and His Bhikkhus by the good physician Jivaka. When the king got to where the Buddha was, he found Him sitting quietly with all his Bhikkhus round Him in the preaching hall. The king exchanged the usual greetings of courtesy with the Buddha, and after taking a seat, asked the Great Teacher if he could tell what was the benefit or advantage of living like an ascetic. "What profit is it to a man to live like a Bhikkhu?" said King Ajatasattu. [1] "I have asked several other leaders of ascetics this question, but I have never received a satisfying answer from any one of them. They always answered by telling me about something else I did not ask about. It was as if a person should enquire about bread-fruit, and in reply be told all about mangoes. So I shall be highly pleased, Reverend Sir, to hear what you will say in reply to this question of mine."

Then the Buddha, after a few words exchanged back and forth, proceeded to tell King Ajatasattu at great length all the benefits that come to a man both in this life and afterwards through becoming a Bhikkhu; and He did it so well that when He had ended His long discourse, Ajatasattu declared himself entirely satisfied that what the Buddha had answered was true, and that it was the best thing in the world to be a Bhikkhu if a man could be one, honestly and sincerely and follow so great and good a teacher as the Buddha. And he asked the Buddha to look upon him henceforth as a follower of His and not of any other religious teacher.

After the King had gone away again, the Buddha said to the Bhikkhus round Him:

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[1] Read "The Fruits of the Homeless Life," by the author, or "The Visible Fruits of a Buddhist Monk," by J. Wettha Singha.

"O Bhikkhus, this king was much moved in his mind just now as I was speaking to him. If, O Bhikkhus, this king had not done that evil deed, had not caused the death of his father the just king, there where he sat just now, he would have seen the Truth with clear eyes, and left his throne and everything behind him, and become a Bhikkhu and an Arahant."

This, the longest sermon the Buddha ever spoke can be read in its complete form in the Digha Nikaya of the Sutta Pitaka. It is called the Samaññaphala Sutta, or the Discourse concerning the fruit of the life of an ascetic.

And here is the shortest sermon the Lord Buddha ever delivered;

Some one once asked the Buddha: "What is the best thing anybody can give as alms? What thing has the best taste? What thing gives the most pleasure? What thing is best fitted to bring passion to and end?" And the Buddha replied to all these four questions with just this one word: "Dhamma."

Of course His questioner then asked Him to explain a little more what He meant; and the Buddha then said:

"The giving of alms, though it is a good thing to do, cannot by itself bring a man on to the Path that leads to Deliverance: only the Dhamma can do this. Therefore the making known of the Dhamma, the trouble a man takes to give a knowledge of the Dhamma to others — this is the best kind of giving, this is the best kind of alms.

"Also, through learning the Dhamma, the heart is filled with joy and the mind delighted with its sweet taste, because it destroys all those passions in men which cause them suffering, and brings them at last to the final end of all sufferings — to supreme Nibbana. Therefore the Dhamma is the most sweet tasting of all things, and the most pleasing of all things, and the best thing in the world for putting passion to an end. And so, my disciples, preach the Dhamma to all mankind, and thus you will be giving the very best of alms to all beings that live on the earth or in the heavens."

XVI
The Kindness of the Buddha

UPON one occasion when the Buddha was known to be going to deliver a discourse in a village where he had rested overnight, a poor farmer—a Brahmin—living nearby made up his mind to be present and hear the Great Teacher speak. But to his dismay, on the morning of the day when the Buddha was to preach, he found that one of his bullocks was missing. He was only a poor man and could not afford to lose it, so he set off at once into the jungle all round to look for it, hoping that he would soon find it, and be able to get back to the village before the time when the preaching was to begin.

But the bullock had wandered further away than he expected; and although he made all the haste he could searching here, there and everywhere, wherever he thought his bullock might have got to, it was some time after mid-day before he found it and got back to the village. He was very hungry and very tired with running about all the morning under the hot sun, but he did not want to miss hearing the Great Teacher speak, so without waiting to take a rest or get anything to eat, he hurried to the place where the Buddha was, hoping he would still be in time to hear the end of the sermon at least. But when he got to the preaching place what was his surprise to find that the sermon had not even begun. There in the preaching hall the Buddha sat silent with all the people round Him patiently waiting for Him to begin. Pleased and thankful to find that he was still in time, the farmer crept quietly in at the back of the hall to look for a seat there.

But as soon as he came in at the door, the Buddha saw him, and kindly asked him if he had had anything to eat. The farmer replied that he had only just come back from looking for a bullock he had lost, and he had not stopped to eat anything because he did not want to miss the sermon.

On hearing this, the Buddha ordered one of His supporters near Him to give the farmer some food and He would wait for him to finish his breakfast before beginning the sermon. Then when the farmer had satisfied his hunger and taken a seat near Him, the Buddha began His discourse; and the farmer knew that the Buddha had somehow heard that he wanted to hear Him preach, and had sat silent in the preaching hall keeping everybody waiting until he should arrive.

Some of the people and the Bhikkhus thought it was very strange and not quite right that the Buddha should concern Himself about the food of a person who was only a householder, not a Bhikkhu, and not even a follower of His at all, but a Brahmin. But the Buddha's kindness and thoughtfulness for the Brahmin who wanted so much to hear Him preach was well rewarded, for the Brahmin's

heart was touched by the Buddha's consideration for him, and when the sermon was over he became the Buddha's follower for the rest of his life.

On another occasion the Buddha again showed His kind consideration for common people this time for a young girl.

In the town near which He then was staying there lived a weaver with one daughter who used to help him with his work. This girl was very anxious to hear the Buddha preach, but on the very day when the Buddha was to give His discourse it happened that she and her father had an urgent piece of work which they had to get finished that very day for an important customer. So the girl made up her mind to hurry with her part of the work, so that she might be able both to finish it and also hear the Great Teacher's sermon. Instantly she set to her task and wound up all her yarn on a quill and took it along, intending to carry it to the shed where her father had his loom. But on the way to the shed she had to pass near the place where the crowd sat motionless waiting for the words that were to fall from the Teacher's lips. And the girl laid her quill of yarn down and timidly took a seat behind the last row of the assembled congregation. But the Buddha saw that the young girl was ready to understand and follow His teaching; and He called to her to come nearer where she could hear better so that she might not miss anything He said. The girl came forward, and, to put her at ease, the Buddha encouragingly asked her where she was coming from and where she was going to. The young girl, thus questioned, replied that she knew where she was coming from and also where she was going to, "but at the same time," said she, "I am ignorant, Reverend Sir, of the place where I came from, and the place to which I am going."

When the people present heard her give this strange answer to the Buddha's question, they became very indignant, for they thought she was trying to make fun of the Great Teacher, and they began to murmur and talk about putting her out of the hall for what they thought her gross impertinence. But the Buddha saw what the young girl was really thinking about in making this strange reply to His question, and He told the people to keep still. Then, turning to the girl, He asked her what she meant. And the girl spoke and said: "I know that I was coming from my father's house, and that I was going to our weaving-shed. But what existence I have come from into this present existence — that I do not know at all. Neither am I sure about the existence that will follow after this one. Of these two things I am quite ignorant. My mind can discover nothing about either the one or the other."

Then the Buddha and every one present praised the wisdom and insight of the young girl; and the Buddha began His sermon. And when it was finished, the young girl having listened eagerly and attentively to it all, she became one who has taken the first step on the Higher Path; she became what is called a Sotapanna — that is, one who has entered the stream that eventually, without fail, will carry her on to Nibbana.

On another day as the Buddha was walking through a wood, He happened to come upon a deer struggling in a snare that had been set by a hunter. The Buddha at once went forward and released the struggling animal and let it run away. Then He sat down under a tree near by to rest. And by and by the hunter came along,

and saw at a glance that a deer had been caught in his snare, and that somebody had released it, letting it get away again. And when he looked round to see who it might be, his eye fell on the ascetic dressed all in yellow, who was sitting under a tree near by. The hunter knew at once that this must be the person who had caused him to lose his deer. “There are getting to be too many of these holy men,” he said to himself in great anger. “They are always sneaking about everywhere spoiling honest men’s business with their pious ways.” And in his rage he lifted his bow, fitted an arrow to the bowstring, and taking good aim at the Buddha who meanwhile sat perfectly quite, let fly. “I am going now to make one less of them anyway,” said the hunter. But his hand trembled so much as he took aim at this so strangely serene ascetic, that his arrow missed. Never in his life before had he missed anything he aimed at so close, and full of anger, at himself now he aimed another arrow at the Lord Buddha, and missed again. Astounded at his sudden poor skill in shooting, once more he shot an arrow at the Buddha and once more missed. Then, with a feeling very much like fear, he dropped his bow and arrows, and going up to the Buddha, humbly asked Him who He was.

The Buddha told him, and then very mildly and gently began to talk to him about the evil of taking life which it is so very easy to take, but so very hard to give back again once it is taken. And the hunter listened to the Lord Buddha’s words, and was so much impressed by them, that he there and them promised never again to kill any living thing at all, but henceforth, as the Buddha wished him to do, earn his living in some way that did not involve the hurting of any living creature.

Another man who took life and was turned from that evil way of doing by the Buddha was called Angulimala. The life that this man took, however, was human life. And he had received his name of Angulimala, which means garland of fingers, because he had killed ninety-nine people and cut a finger off each person he killed, and strung it on a chain of fingers that he had hung around his neck. And now he was waiting by the roadside for another person to come along whom he also meant to kill, so as to get the hundredth finger he wanted for his ghastly necklace. And it happened that the Buddha came along the road as he was waiting thus. He thought it was just an ordinary ascetic, and he meant to kill Him and get the hundredth finger he wanted.

And he too, Angulimala, just like the hunter, three times tried to get at the Buddha to kill Him, and three times, just like the hunter, he failed. Then, very much astonished, he went up to the Buddha and began to speak to Him. And the Buddha did not utter a single word of reproach to him for trying to kill Him, but instead, told him about the Doctrine. And after thus hearing about the Doctrine from the Buddha’s own lips, Angulimala confessed his wickedness in killing so many people, and became a Bhikkhu. And not long after, through diligent study and practice he became an Arahant.

But this did not free him from having to suffer the consequences of his evil deeds. For, when he went into the town of Savatthi with his begging bowl to gather alms of food, the people of the town pelted him with stones and hurt him so severely that in a short time he died. But he was not dejected or sorrowful at this that had happened to him. Neither was he angry at all at the people who had

stoned him. He knew quite well that he was only suffering the results of his own ill deeds, and that it was far better to suffer like this at once and be done with it, than to have the consequences of his wrong-doing always hanging over his head in the future. So Angulimala died calmly and serenely and passed away to Nibbana.

XVII
Devadatta

THE Buddha had one disciple whom He particularly loved, and who in return, had a specially warm affection for his Master, and that was His own cousin Ananda. Indeed, when the Buddha had reached the age of fifty-one and was beginning to feel the burden of His advancing years, He chose Ananda to be His special private attendant, giving out through Ananda any orders He wished made known to the other Bhikkhus. The other Bhikkhus also, when they wished to see the Buddha about any special matter, always asked first through Ananda. And often, when there was something they wanted from the Buddha which they did feel very sure they would not get if they asked for it themselves, they used to get Ananda to ask it from the Buddha on their behalf, for they knew that He was fond of Ananda and would be more likely to do what they wanted if Ananda spoke in favor of it.

But the Buddha had another cousin who also had become a Bhikkhu under Him, but in his disposition towards is teacher and master, was the very opposite of Ananda. Far from taking delight in waiting upon the Buddha and serving Him faithfully, he was envious and jealous of Him, and wished to break up the Brotherhood of Bhikkhus He gathered round Him.

The evil-disposed cousin of the Buddha was Devadatta. Being of the royal family of Kapilavatthu, he was inclined to be proud of himself and of the royal blood in his veins. So when, some time after he had become a Bhikkhu, Sariputta and Moggallana joined the Order, and on account of their great learning and ability, every one began to take much notice of them and call them “the right and the left hand of the Buddha,” Devadatta became very jealous of them now, and annoyed and angry at the attention received by these two Bhikkhus who had not been in the Order as long as he, and were just of a common family while he was of royal blood and the Buddha’s cousin to boot. Indeed, Devadatta became so angry at what he considered the unjust neglect of himself in favor of these two new-comers, that he left the company of Bhikkhus who went with the Buddha everywhere He went, and set off for Rajagaha where he expected to make friends with the young Prince Ajatasattu the son of King Bimbisara of Magadha, and heir to the throne. When he got to Rajagaha he put on a look of great gravity and solemnity, so that young Prince Ajatasattu was quite struck with his appearance, and thought: “How serious and solemn he looks. This must be a very good Bhikkhu indeed!” And in his great admiration for the serious-looking Devadatta, he built for him a fine Vihara near the city, and Devadatta took up his residence there, and the Prince became his obedient and devoted supporter.

Time passed; and a few years after this, when, in the course of His continual wanderings, the Buddha came again to Rajagaha, Devadatta went to pay Him a

visit, and asked to be allowed to form a company of Bhikkhus of his own, separate from those who accepted the Buddha as their Master. The Buddha, however, refused to give Devadatta the permission he asked for, saying that it was not a good thing for the Sangha to be divided. But Devadatta was bent upon having his own way, and he asked and asked again for permission to have a Sangha of his own, but each time the Buddha refused to grant him his wish.

Then Devadatta's jealousy and envy turned to bitter hatred of the Buddha, and he made up his mind to start a Sangha of his own whether the Buddha gave him permission to do so or not. In this resolve of his he succeeded in getting Prince Ajatasattu to support him; but the Prince's father, King Bimbisara, altogether refused to have anything to do with his plan for a new Sangha, and firmly took the side of the Buddha in the matter.

And now Devadatta, pretending to be very pious and strict in his life, worked his way completely into the confidence of Prince Ajatasattu, and gained such an influence over him that he was ready to do anything Devadatta told him to do. And when Devadatta saw that he could do anything he liked with Ajatasattu, he told him to put his father out of the way, and then he himself would be the King of Magadha and be able to do what he pleased with no one to hinder him, and he could help him, Devadatta, to carry out his scheme for a new Sangha. And Ajatasattu did what his evil counselor Devadatta thus advised him to do, but not suddenly with an arrow or a sword, for he still felt afraid to shed his father's blood. Yet he did kill his father, and in a very cruel way. For he caused his father to be captured and shut up in a prison and given no food, so that King Bimbisara died a slow miserable death by starvation, in spite of all his grief-stricken wife did to try to get the jailers to take food to him. It was in the thirty-seventh year of the Buddha's preaching career that Ajatasattu did this cruel deed, and took the throne of Magadha in the place of his father Bimbisara whom he thus murdered.

Devadatta now had all the power he wanted. The new king of the country was his devoted friend and supporter, and would do anything for him that he asked him to do. So, very soon, he got King Ajatasattu to gather together for him a band of bowmen and he paid them well to go where the Buddha was staying, and shoot the Buddha dead. But when these hired assassins came to the place where the Buddha was, and saw him sitting there so calm, so mild, and yet so majestic looking, they simply could not do what they had come to do, and had been well paid to do. Completely over-awed by the bearing and manner of the Great Teacher, instead of letting loose their arrows at Him, they came up to Him and sat down at His feet in an attitude of reverence and worship. And the Buddha began to talk to them; and after a little they confessed what they had come to do and asked Him to forgive them for their evil intention. Of course the Buddha pardoned them at once, and they promised to Him that they would be His followers for all the remainder of their lives.

But when Devadatta learned that the men he had sent out to kill the Buddha, instead of killing Him, had actually become His followers, he was furious with rage, and resolved next time not to send any one else but to go himself and take the Buddha's life.

Now there was a hill near the palace where the Buddha was staying, and the Buddha used often to take a walk along a path at its foot. So one evening as the Buddha was taking a walk along this road, Devadatta who was all the time on the look out for a good chance to kill Him, without being seen by the Buddha climbed up the hill to a place just above the road, where there was a big rock. Devadatta loosened this rock from the soil round it, and waited till the Buddha was passing right below it. Then he gave the rock a big push and sent it rolling and bounding down the hill-side intending it to fall on the Buddha and crush Him to a jelly. But as the rock was rolling down straight for the Buddha's head, it struck against another big one that happened to lie in its way, and instead of falling straight on the Buddha's head, it broke into a lot of little pieces, and only one little splinter of it struck the Buddha on the foot and lamed Him for a little while. But it did not hurt Him very much, and He was able to walk back to the Vihara. And when He got there, the good and skillful physician Jivaka, put a bandage on it with some healing ointment, and by the next morning the foot was quite well again. So once more Devadatta was defeated in his evil designs.

But he was not yet finished with his endeavors to bring about the death of the Great Teacher. He was going to make one more attempt to get the Buddha out of the way so that he himself might be the leader whom the Bhikkhus would follow. For that was what he thought. He thought that if once the Buddha was dead, then he would become the leader of the Sangha, and all of the Bhikkhus would follow him as their master.

This time he arranged that when the Buddha went out as He did every morning through the streets of Rajagaha begging alms of food, a wild raging elephant should be let loose in the particular street where He was at the time, so that it might rush at Him and trample Him to death. And this was done. The raging elephant was brought to the street where the Buddha was then engaged in passing quietly from door to door begging His morning meal, and then let loose. But instead of rushing at the Buddha and crushing Him under its huge hoofs, it became quite quiet and subdued, and allowed the calm figure in the yellow robe to pass on unharmed. Thus for the third time the attempt of Devadatta to bring about the Buddha's death was defeated.

Devadatta now gave up the idea of killing the Buddha, after failing these three times; but he was still as determined as ever, one way or another to bring about a break in the Sangha. So now he went to visit the Buddha, and pretending to be friendly with Him, told Him that he thought the Bhikkhus did not live strictly enough; he thought it would be better if they lived a harder life like the ascetic followers of other religious teachers, because the common people were inclined to look down on the Buddha's Bhikkhus saying that they seemed to have rather an easy and comfortable life, compared with other ascetics.

Devadatta therefore suggested to the Buddha that He should make it a strict and fixed Vinaya rule that all His Bhikkhus henceforth should live no longer in any kind of roofed dwelling, but should sleep at night at the foot of a tree in the jungle, or in some open place without a roof. He also wanted the Buddha to order his Bhikkhus not to eat food specially prepared for them and brought to them in the place where they were staying, but to live strictly on such food as they got

when round begging with their bowls, and to eat nothing else. Devadatta also wanted the Buddha to command the Bhikkhus not to wear any of the neat, clean, ready-made robes which the people used to give them, but only to cover their bodies with robes which they themselves had put together out of rags picked up on refuse-heaps and in tombs and burial places. And last he wanted the Buddha to make it a fixed rule that His Bhikkhus should not eat fish or meat of any kind. These four things Devadatta wished the Buddha to make binding rules of the Vinaya, which every member of His Sangha would have to observe or leave the Order.

The Buddha, however, flatly refused to make any one of these rules he suggested a binding command upon His Bhikkhus. "But," the Buddha said, "if any Bhikkhu wishes to live always at the foot of trees or in places open to the sky, he can do so. But those who do not wish to do this, may live in places provided for them by benefactors, so long as they are not built too close to houses where the lay people live." And the Buddha said the same about the other three rules proposed by Devadatta. He said that any of his Bhikkhus who wished to do so, could live solely on what was put into their begging bowl when they went through the streets for alms, wear only what robes they made for themselves out of dirty, cast-off rags, and abstain from eating fish and meat. But those who did not wish to observe such practices, need not do so unless they liked. And the Buddha ended by warning Devadatta that he must not try in this cunning way to cause a split in the Sangha, or in the end the consequences would be very had for him.

But, paying no heed to the Buddha's warning, Devadatta went away disappointed and angry, and going to Ananda, tried to get him to side with his views about having a stricter rule for the Bhikkhus. But Ananda refused to agree with him and sided with his Master the Buddha.

Then Devadatta went away to a part of the country where the Bhikkhus had not seen the Buddha for a long time, and succeeded in winning over a lot of them to believe in him and in his new rules for the Sangha. But the Buddha came to hear of this. And one afternoon when Devadatta was asleep in his Vihara, He sent Sariputta to Devadatta's place to speak to the Bhikkhus who had gone wrong and were following Devadatta, and tell them what the Buddha had really said on the matter. And Sariputta did as his Master told him, and spoke to the erring Bhikkhus so well that in a little while they said they wanted to be the Buddha's disciples again; and they all rose up and followed Sariputta back to the Buddha's Vihara.

When Devadatta woke again from his sleep that afternoon he thought the Vihara seemed strangely quiet as if there were nobody in it, and he went out to see what was the matter. And when he went out he found that there was not a single Bhikkhu about the place. And soon he learned that Sariputta had been there while he was sleeping, and had spoken to his Bhikkhus, so that now they had all left him, every one, and gone back to the Buddha. Then Devadatta was filled with rage and fury and ordered his servants to prepare his litter and take him at once to the Buddha's Vihara; he was going to see what the Buddha meant by taking all his disciples from him.

But when Sariputta and the other Bhikkhus heard of Devadatta's rage, and that he was on his way to the Buddha's Vihara, they advised the Buddha to go away, for they feared that when Devadatta came, this time for sure he would kill the Buddha in his fury. But the Buddha was not in the least disturbed at the news that Devadatta was coming, and told Sariputta that he knew that Devadatta could not do Him any harm. "But he is full of anger at the Blessed One," said Sariputta; and again he urged his Master to save Himself while there was time, for Devadatta was coming nearer. But the Buddha still refused to move saying again that He felt quite safe against anything Devadatta could do.

And the Buddha proved to be right. For the next thing the Bhikkhus heard was that Devadatta's bearers had stopped on the way. Then came the news that Devadatta was dead. And it was quite true. Death struck down Devadatta himself at the very time, when he was on his way to bring death to the Buddha.

After this there was no more trouble in the Sangha as long as the Buddha was alive. The only distressing thing that happened in connection with the Buddha was that the king and the princes of the royal houses of Kapilavatthu and of Kosala, both were all killed in war by the cruel Ajatasattu, after once before having been saved from that fate by the efforts of the Buddha. This blotting out of the Buddha's family happened in the year before that in which He Himself passed away into Nibbana.

XVIII
Mahaparinibbana

THE Lord Buddha now began to feel that His days in this world were coming to a close; but before He passed away He wished to give His Bhikkhus some last advice which should serve to guide them in their general conduct after He was gone and could advise and guide them no more with His living voice. So He told Ananda to gather the Bhikkhus together in the Preaching Hall at Rajagaha; and when all the Bhikkhus had assembled, He addressed them as follows:

"O Bhikkhus, as long as you remain united and meet together frequently, so long the Sangha will continue to flourish and prosper. So long as you meet together and decide all important questions in union and harmony one with another, and do not make new and oppressive rules, hard to keep, where I have made none, but strictly adhere to the observance of those rules which I have given you for your help and protection — so long as you do this, the Sangha will never decay and die out.

"Always treat with respect those who have been longer in the Sangha than yourselves, and pay attention to their counsel and admonition. Be ever on the watch against the beginnings of anything that tends to evil in order that you may not become the slaves of evil before you are aware. Do not seek company: seek solitude. When Bhikkhus from other places come to visit you, attend to their wants and treat them well and hospitably. When any among you are sick, let the others wait upon them and care for them. He who thus waits upon and cares for a sick brother, it is the same as if he waited upon and cared for me. Shun pride vain show. Seek the companionship of the good; avoid the company of the bad. Think and reflect frequently upon the nature of all things here, that they do not last, that they cause suffering to him who clings closely to them, that they are empty of any solid substance."

"So long as you do these things and follow the rules of conduct I have given you for your guidance, you will always be respected and esteemed by the householders and everyone, and the Sangha will prosper, and you will be safe from falling into anything low and vulgar and ignoble, you will be shielded from everything unbecoming, everything unworthy of those who have left the household life to live in homelessness."

This was the last sermon the Buddha preached to the whole Sangha.

After this, He went to the city of Nalanda, and then to the city of Patali; and at this latter place He preached this His last sermon to the householder folk.

"Dayakas, whoever breaks the precepts of right conduct which I have taught for the guidance of householders, or is careless and slack in his observance of

them, such a person will lose his good name among men, and his well-being and happiness in this world will grow less and less, and finally dwindle away and disappear altogether. He will have no certainty, he will feel no confidence of mind, but, wretched and unhappy, at death he will pass away to a fate of misery and suffering.

"But those who faithfully keep these precepts of good conduct which I have laid down, those who are not careless in the observance of them, such persons will gain honor and enjoy a high reputation among men. They will enjoy health and wealth and all prosperity. They will be welcomed wherever they may go. They will be received with pleasure even in the company of the great, among princes and king's counselors, among the good and the learned and the wise. Their minds will be free from any kind of doubt or anxiety; and after death they will pass to a state of happiness."

And now the Buddha is getting to be an old man. He is eighty years of age. For nearly forty-five years He has been traveling about on foot up and down His native land of India, teaching and preaching without any rest except during the rainy season of each year. And now He is feeling His years. He is weary and worn out in body, though His mind remains as strong as ever. He feels that He is not going to live much longer, and His thoughts turn to the north, towards the lands that lie at the foot of the great snowy mountains, where His youthful days were passed. It is in that country that He wishes to pass away from the world He has served so ungrudgingly these many years. So, leaving Rajagaha. He turns His now feeble steps northwards, intending to go to the little town of Kusinara, and there await death. On the way to it, He passes through the city that is now called Patna, and then, still going north, through the rich town of Vesali where He once was splendidly entertained by the courtesan Ambapali, and given a Vihara by her, much to the annoyance of the young princes of the place who wanted to have the honor of doing this themselves.

When He had arrived at the little village of Beluva, He sent away all the Bhikkhus who had been coming with Him so far, all except his faithful attendant Ananda, who never left Him night or day, telling the other Bhikkhus that they had better spend the Vassa or rainy season at some place where they would have a better chance of getting support than a little place like Beluva which could not provide food for so many of them. So most of the Bhikkhus went back to Vesali to spend the rainy season near that large and rich city.

Meanwhile, the Buddha resolved to spend this last Vassa of His life at Beluva. But He had not been staying there very long when He was seized with severe illness accompanied by violent pain. And the sickness increased and the pain grew worse until Ananda began to think that his Master was going to die. But the Buddha did not want to die at Beluva. He did not want to die until He had seen His Bhikkhus once more and encouraged them and strengthened them in the good life they are trying to live. So, with a great effort of will, He managed to master His sickness, being determined to live and see and speak to His Bhikkhus once more before He passed away. And after a time, feeling better again, He went outside and took a seat on the shady side of the little house He was living in, out

of the hot sun, on a mat Ananda had made ready for Him. And Ananda sat down near Him and said:

"How glad I am to see that the Blessed One is better again! I almost fainted away when I saw how ill the Blessed One was a little while ago. I very nearly swooned. But then I thought: 'No, most surely the Blessed One will not pass away to Nibbana till He has left full instructions about the future of the Sangha, and how it is to be conducted when He is gone.'"

"But Ananda," said the Buddha, "what more can the Bhikkhus ask of me? I have taught them the whole doctrine; I have not hidden from them anything they ought to know in order to be able to reach Nibbana. I have been a faithful teacher to them, and told them all they need to know so that they may bring suffering to an end. One who wanted to rule the Sangha and keep it under his own control, might well leave orders about its future government. But I, Ananda, do not wish to rule over the Sangha, or to keep it under My control. What instructions then, should I leave about its future? I am now an old man, feeble and worn out. My days are at an end. I am eighty years of age. I have only one thing I want to say to you all. Be to yourselves your own light. Be to yourselves your own refuge. Do not go looking for any other light or refuge. Whoever, Ananda, when I am gone shall be to himself his own light, his own refuge, looking for no other light or refuge — whosoever shall take the truth I have taught as his light and his refuge — that disciple, Ananda, now and always will be my true disciple, will be walking in the right way."

Next morning the Buddha was feeling so well again that He was able to go into Vesali on His usual begging round; and in the evening He sent Ananda to bring the Bhikkhus who were living in Vesali to Him, so that He might speak to them all once more.

When the Bhikkhus had all come, He exhorted them earnestly, as His last parting admonition to them, to follow faithfully the good way He had taught them, for the sake of the world, for the sake of the benefit, the advantage, the welfare of the world of men which need to have kept before it the example of the holy life, perfect and pure. "All that belongs to this world is changeable and unlasting," He said. "Exert yourselves! Strive earnestly! Follow the Good Way! Keep close watch over your minds! So shall you find certain deliverance from the round of birth and death and all things evil."

Then, the next morning, the Buddha started out direct for Kusinara, and on the way, at a little village called Pava, He was invited by the son of the village goldsmith, whose name was Cunda, to partake of a meal of *sukara-maddavam*, a kind of mushroom which wild boars much delight to eat, hence its name which means *boar's delight*.

The Buddha partook of the meal Cunda offered Him, and after He had eaten, felt very much refreshed and strengthened. Indeed, He thought He had quite got over His illness and He praised Cunda for having given Him a meal that had done Him so much good, and said that the good deed Cunda thus had done would make for his well-being both here and hereafter, both now and in the future.

Unfortunately, the improvement produced in the Buddha's condition by the meal Cunda had just given Him, did not last very long. The illness that had first

attacked Him at Beluva came on Him again. But again by a great effort of will He mastered it, and getting to His feet, with failing strength struggled on once more towards Kusinara, and after a painful journey at length reached the grove of Sal trees outside the town which belonged to the princes of the place.

"Go Ananda," said the Buddha when He came in sight of the grove and saw that His journey was now ended; "go and make ready a place for Me to lie down on between those two big Sal trees. I am very weary Ananda, and would like to lie down and rest."

So Ananda took the Buddha's robe and, folding it in four, spread it on the ground between the two big Sal trees, so that his Master could lie on it with His head towards the North. Then the Buddha lay down on the couch thus prepared for Him, not to sleep, but only to rest His sick and weary body while His mind remained calm and collected as ever. For, did He not once tell Sariputta in the years when He was still hale and well, that if He were to live to become so old and weak that He could not walk but had to be carried about in a litter, still, for all that, He would be able to expound His Teaching and answer any question about it that might be asked even by the wisest and cleverest scholars, as long as they could stay awake to ask questions! He would never be tired in His mind.

But now, when Ananda saw that his beloved Master was really going to leave him he was filled with grief; he could not help it. And he went into the Vihara close by, and hiding himself from the Buddha's eyes behind the door, he began to weep, saying to himself: "I am not like the other Bhikkhus. I am still only a learner. I have not yet reached the state of Arahant. And now my Teacher is going to pass away and leave me, he who has always been so kind to me." And the hot tears rolled down poor Ananda's cheeks.

Then the Buddha opened His eyes and seeing that Ananda was not beside Him as usual, He said to the other Bhikkhus who were round Him: "Where is Ananda?"

"Reverend Lord," replied one of the Bhikkhus, "the venerable Ananda has gone into the Vihara and is now standing behind the door there weeping, and saying that he is only a learner, not perfect yet, and now is losing his teacher who was always kind to him."

"Go, O Bhikkhu," said the Buddha, "and tell Ananda that his teacher is calling for him."

So the Bhikkhu went and told Ananda that the Buddha wanted to see him. And Ananda came and sat down near the Blessed One. And the Blessed One spoke to him and said

"Enough, now, Ananda! Do not grieve, do not weep. Have I not told you many and many a time that it must be that some day we shall be separated, cut off, sundered, parted from all that is dear to us? This must be, Ananda. There is no help for this. How is it possible that any-thing that has been born, has had a beginning, should not again die, come to an end? Such a thing, Ananda, is not possible. For a long time now, Ananda, you have waited upon the Tathagata and served him with body and speech and mind, in deed and word and thought, kindly, devotedly, cheerfully, ungrudgingly, and beyond measure. You have done much that is good by your faithful service of me, Ananda. Now exert yourself to

get rid of all the things that hinder you from becoming an Arahant, and in a very short time you will become one."

Then the Buddha spoke to the other Bhikkhus round Him and said:

"All the Buddhas before me have each had a favorite disciple and body-servant just as I have had Ananda. And all the Buddhas to come will each have a favorite attendant like Ananda. A wise and faithful servant has Ananda been to me. He always knew when it was a suitable time to let visitors see me. He has always been pleasant to them in all his words and ways, and they have always been pleased with his manners towards them. When he has addressed them, they have always wanted to hear more from his lips. Such an excellent disciple and servant has Ananda always been to me."

Then Ananda spoke and said to the Buddha:

"Pray, Reverend Lord, do not pass away to Nibbana from this little mud-built place, this jungle town, this out-of-the-way corner. There are great cities like Rajagaha and Savatthi and Vesali and others. Let the Blessed One be pleased to pass away from one of these places. In these cities there are many wealthy and high-placed believers in the Blessed One who will see to His funeral rites in a manner worthy of the Tathagata.

"Nay, Ananda," said the Buddha, "do not talk like that. Do not call this a little out-of-the-way, mud-built, jungle place. For at one time Ananda, in days gone by, this was a great and flourishing city, the capital of the country where a great king lived in his golden palace."

"But go now, Ananda, and tell the chief men and the people of Kusinara that to-night, in the last watch of the night, the Tathagata will pass away to Nibbana. Therefore let them come and see the Tathagata before He passes away."

So Ananda, taking with him another Bhikkhu, did as his Master bid him, and went to Kusinara and told the elders of the town that the Buddha was going to pass away that night. And when they heard it, they were much grieved, and cried: "Alas, too soon, too soon is the Blessed One passing away to Nibbana. Too soon, too soon is the light of the world vanishing from the sight of men." And all the people of Kusinara, men, women and children, grieving and sorrowing, came to the Sal Tree grove where the Buddha lay, to take a last farewell of Him. And family by family, they bowed low before Him in reverence, and so bade Him farewell.

Now it happened that a certain wandering ascetic, called Subhadda was staying near Kusinara at this time, and when he heard that the Buddha was about to pass away, he resolved to go and see Him at once and ask Him about a certain matter that puzzled him, before He passed away. For he felt sure that the Lord Buddha could answer the question he wished to ask and clear up all his doubts about it.

So Subhadda went to the Sal Tree grove, and told Ananda about his question, and asked him kindly to give him an opportunity of speaking to the Buddha and putting his question to Him before He passed away.

But Ananda said: "Enough, Subhadda, enough. The Blessed One is very weary. Do not trouble Him with questions now."

But Subhadda was too anxious to have his doubts settled by the Buddha before He passed away, to take a refusal from Ananda, and he pressed Ananda again and again to let him see the Buddha; and Ananda again and again told him that his Master was far too ill and could not be disturbed by any one.

However, the Buddha, where He lay, caught a word or two of the talk that was passing between Ananda and Subhadda, and He called Ananda to Him and said: "Come, Ananda. Do not keep Subhadda from seeing me. Let Subhadda come and see me if he wishes. What he asks will be for the sake of learning from me, and not merely in order to trouble me. He is quick of wit, and will readily understand what I say to him, Ananda."

Then Ananda allowed the wandering ascetic Subbhada to approach the Buddha. And after greeting the Buddha with all respect, Subhadda said:

"Gotama, have all the famous leaders of ascetics of other schools than yours, discovered the Truth as they say they have? Or have they not discovered the Truth? Or have some of them discovered the Truth, and others not?"

"Enough, O Subhadda," said the Buddha. "Never mind that question. But listen to me and pay close attention to what I say, and I will make known to you the Teaching."

"In whatever doctrine or discipline the Noble Eightfold Path is not found, there also are not to be found those have become Sotapanna, or Sakadagami, or Anagami, or Arahant. But wherever the Noble Eightfold Path is found, there also is found the Sotapanna and the Sakadagami and the Anagami and the Arahant. And in this Doctrine and Discipline of mine, O Subhadda, is to be found the Noble Eightfold Path, and in it alone the Sotapanna and the Sakadagami and the Anagami and the Arahant. In no other schools of ascetics are these to be found. And if only my Bhikkhus live rightly and follow my precepts, the world will never be without true and genuine Arahants."

Then Subhadda asked to be admitted to the Order of Bhikkhus, and the Buddha granted his request, and told Ananda to give him ordination. In this way Subhadda became the very last Bhikkhu whom the Buddha admitted to the Order, just as Konkani in the deer park near Benares was the first. And by earnest and diligent labor in the Doctrine and Discipline, Subhadda very shortly became an Arahant.

Then the Buddha spoke to Ananda again and said:

"Perhaps, Ananda, some of the Bhikkhus may be thinking: 'The Teacher's words we shall hear no more. We have no teacher now.' But, Ananda, that is not the right way to look at the matter. The doctrine and the discipline which I have taught you and counseled you to follow while I was with you, these will be your teacher when I am gone. And now, while I am alive, you all address one another as 'Brother,' but when I am gone, the older Bhikkhus are to address those younger than themselves in the Order by their simple name, or as 'Brother,' but those that are younger must always address those that are older than themselves in the Order, as 'Reverend Sir,' or 'Venerable Sir,' and after I am gone, Ananda, the Order, if it wishes, may do away with all the lesser and minor rules of the Order."

Then the Buddha, addressing the other Bhikkhus said:

"If any among you has any doubts or perplexities regarding the Buddha or the Dhamma or the Sangha or the Path or about what is Right Conduct, ask about these now, O Bhikkhus, so that afterwards you may not have cause to regret that you did not have your doubts settled while the Teacher was with you to do so."

But at these words of the Buddha, none of the Bhikkhus said anything: none of them had any questions to ask: none of them had any doubts or perplexities.

Then a second and a third time the Buddha asked any of the Bhikkhus who had any question they would like to put to Him, to do so now while He was with them to answer it; but still no Bhikkhu spoke.

Then Ananda spoke and said: "It is wonderful it is admirable. Reverend Lord! I do believe that in all this great company of Bhikkhus there is not a single one who has any doubts or perplexities about the Buddha or the Dhamma or the Sangha or the Path or the Right Rule of Conduct."

"With you, Ananda," said the Buddha, "this may be a matter of faith and belief. But I, Ananda, I know that not a single Bhikkhu here has any doubts or perplexities about these things. Of all the Bhikkhus here present, Ananda, even the most backward of them is not liable to fall back into any lower state of existence, but is certain to attain wisdom supreme."

Then the Blessed One once more addressed the assembled Bhikkhus, and these were the very last words He spoke on this earth.

"O Bhikkhus," He said, "this is now my last admonition to you. *Sabbe sankhara anicca, Appamadena sampadetha.* All the constituents of existence are unlasting. By earnestness work out your liberation."

Then the Blessed One sank into trance ever deeper and deeper. Then He came out of trance again. Then He again passed into trance a little way; and from this trance passed away with that passing away which leaves nothing whatever behind that can cause birth again in this or any other world. The Blessed One passed away to Parinibbana.

It is twenty-five centuries ago since Siddhattha Gotama, the Sakya Prince who became Gotama the Buddha, thus passed away in far Kusinara. But His words, His Teachings, have not passed away. These still remain, the guide through life to what is beyond life, of millions of the human race. For, after His passing away, the Arahants and other disciples of that Blessed One spread the tidings of His great Teaching all through His native land of India, and passing beyond its boundaries, carried it far away to the West into Egypt, and to the East into Tibet and China and Japan. To Lapland in the cold North the Message was borne by them, and to Java and the isles of the southern seas. So that to-day two and a half millennia since He passed away from the earth, nearly a third part of those that dwell upon it revere the name of the Exalted One, the Blessed One, the Buddha Supreme, the Instructor of gods and men the Teacher unique, without a peer, who taught Nibbana and the Way Thither.

The Bhikkhu Silacara: A Biography

In 1906 a Scotsman in his thirty-fifth year, known as J.F. McKechnie, was admitted to the Sangha by the Thera U Kumara at Kyun Daw Gone Kyaung (Temple), Kemmendine, Rangoon, Burma. He was given the Bhikkhu's name of Silacara.

The new monk had come to the country about the beginning of this century, having, whilst in Glasgow, read about Buddhism in a copy of the magazine *Buddhism* which he found in the public library, and answered an advertisement of its editor the Bhikkhu Ananda Metteyya (Alan Bennett, in lay life) for one with literary ability to assist him in the editorial work in Rangoon. McKechnie remained with the British Buddhist monk until the magazine ceased publication. Then, prior to his own entering the Sangha as noted above, he taught for a year in the Buddhist boys' school of Mme Hla Oung.

The future Bhikkhu was born in Hull, Yorkshire, on October 22nd, 1871. His father was a famous baritone singer, Sir Charles Santley, and his mother was Caroline Mavis. After the years of schooling, till he was 21, he worked as apprentice to the trade of Stock-cutter in a clothing factory, emigrating therefrom to America to work for four years on a fruit and dairy farm.

The Bhikkhu Silacara worked untiringly, writing, preaching, traveling. He once went on a mission to Sikkim, on the Maharajah's invitation, but the mission bore hardly any fruit owing to the point of view of the lamas who thought that pure Buddhism would be corrupted, if in the hands of the ignorant peasant. He broke down in health, contracting nervous asthma, complicated with heart trouble, and on the advice of the German Buddhist Dr. P. Dahlke, left the robes and for England late in 1925. Here he worked with the Anagarika Dharmapala at the Mahabodhi Society's British branch, lecturing and editing the *British Buddhist*. His health suffered again and in 1932 when he had to leave London to live in Surrey. But he never ceased to work, for he wrote to Buddhist Magazines in the country, in Ceylon, Burma, Germany, etc.

During World War II his little retreat Wisboro Green having been sold, he entered an Old Persons' Home at Bury, where he, who had led the austere life of a Buddhist monk, bore the hard way of a state charitable institution with equanimity until his death three years ago.

Of the books on Buddhism which he wrote, those perhaps best known to Ceylon Buddhists are *The Four Noble Truths*, *The Eightfold Path*, *Kamma*, *Lotus Blossoms*. In the early twenties Ceylon readers of the *Buddhist Chronicle*, a paper started by Mr. P. de. S. Kularatne, the Principal of Ananda College, Colombo, were greatly encouraged by the vigorous contribution which the Bhikkhu made regularly. The interest of these articles was heightened specially by the fact that

there was a controversy going on at that time, the leader on the Buddhist side being American Buddhist Scholar of Mahayana, Dr. W. Y. Evans-Wentz *Buddhist Annual of Ceylon*.

The Bhikkhu also contributed a number of articles to the *Buddhist Annual of Ceylon* an illustrated magazine of a high order which the firm Messrs. W. E. Bastain & Co. of Colombo were publishing with great acceptance to places and people all over the world wherever Orientalia found welcome, and these were a formidable tally. For this Firm he specially wrote the *Young People's Life of the Buddha* the popularity of which remains undimmed throughout the decades in which it is being re-printed.

Colombo, 15th January 1953

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